

THE BLIND FOLLOWING OF MADHHABS

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FOREWORD

Verily all praise is for Allaah. We praise Him, seek his help and ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allaah from the evil within ourselves and from our evil actions. Whomsoever Allaah guides, none can misguide and whomsoever Allaah misguides, none can guide. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah, alone, having no partner and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger.

To proceed: Anyone who comes across the discussions of the followers of the madhhab will not doubt that the misfortune of blind-following of madhabs is one of the causes of decline of the Muslims and their backwardness. It has transformed their minds so that they do not think except with the minds of other people.

The Imaams and their first students - rahimahumullaah - did not blindly stick to their own opinions like these followers who have forgotten a large portion of the advice given by the Imaams. Thus Shaytaan has caused enmity and hatred between them so that they relit a fire which Allaah had extinguished and in reality, they turned away from the sayings of the Mujtahid Imaams and clung onto the hypothetical answers given by late-comers who did not leave anything of the madhabs except their names.

Many scholars throughout the ages have understood this fact and so they have written about it and done well. But the work of ‘Allaamah al-Ma’soomee - rahimahullaah - *Hadiyyat us-Sultaan ilaa Muslimee Bilaad il-Yaabaan*¹ is, despite its small size, perhaps one of the most beneficial books written on the subject. This is due to its excellent style and strength of proofs, to the point that it is a fatal blow to the misfortune of blind-following of madhabs.

This is a concise version of this book, edited by Shaykh Saleem al-Hilaalee. This book was translated into English by Daawood ibn Ronald Burbank.

We ask Allaah, the Blessed and Most High, to make this work beneficial to the Muslims. Those who do not give precedence to anything before Allaah and His Messenger, so that they may unsheathe the sword of knowledge, which is: ‘Allaah says... His Messenger says...’ And ride upon the back of truth, which is acquiring knowledge along with its proof. Thus expelling from Islaam the alterations of those going beyond bounds, the false claims of the deceptive, the misinterpretations of the ignorant and the bigotry of the blind-followers: those who pick and choose from the Qur’aan and divide up their Deen into sects and become separate groups.

¹ The Sultaan’s Gift to the Muslims of Japan.

A BIOGRAPHY² OF SHAYKH MUHAMMAD SULTAAN AL-MA'SOOME AL-KHAJNADEE³

His Time and Environment:

He was born in 1297 A.H. in Khajnah, a town of Mesopotamia, into a noble and wealthy family, known for their knowledge.

The worst manifestation of the following of madhhabs appeared in the later ages when blind-following increased and spread rapidly amongst all the people, to the point that hardly a single place was safe from it. From those lands attacked by blind-following of madhhabs were the lands beyond the Tigris where it encamped with all its callousness and encircled its people just as the bracelet encircles the wrist.

They believed that a Muslim was he who followed Abu Haneefah - rahimahullaah - and that the Maalikees, Shaafi'ees and the Hanbalees and Ahlul-Hadeeth were all upon error and misguidance. They said that it was not permissible to marry a Shaafi'ee woman since they are unbelievers since they declare 'I am a believer if Allaah wills.' They considered it obligatory to give pledge of allegiance to a Soofee Shaykh and that the best of them are the Naqshabandeers. They further claimed that Ahlus-Sunnah are the Maatureedeers and Ash'arees and that other than them are innovators. It is in the midst of this Soofee/Hanafee environment that al-Ma'somee grew up.

His Studies, Journeying in Search of Knowledge and his Teachers:

Al-Ma'somee began by reading the books and treatises written in the Persian language, the language of the people of his land. Then he began to study the Arabic language and books on logic and philosophy. He studied the works of 'Aqeedah, such as *an-Nasafiyyah*, *al-'Adudiyyah*, *at-Tahaawiyyah*, *Jawharatut-Tawheed*, *as-Sanoosiyyah* and other works, all of them with the two Shaykhs, Muhammad 'Iwad al-Khajnadee and 'Abdur-Razzaaq ar-Ragheenaanee al-Bukhaaree.

Having reached the age of twenty-three, he was at a stage where he could begin to research for himself, it was then that the mistakes of the blind-followers, their contradictions and their disobedience to their Imaams became clear to him. He declared this publicly, which caused the blind-followers who had been baptised in the river of blind-following of madhhabs to become furious. When the dispute grew severe al-Ma'somee decided to travel to the Hijaz⁴ and set off from the land of Bukhaara in the year 1323 A.H. During his journey he travelled through Istanbul and saw in the capital of the Ottoman Khilaafah such things as would cause the heart of the believer to bleed.

Al-Ma'somee - rahimahullaah - said,

² Sources for his biography are *Bid'atut-Ta'assub il-Madhhabee* of Muhammad 'Eed 'Abbaasee (pp. 274-275) and *Mukhtasar Tarjumah Haal Muhammad Sultaan* which is included in his work *Hukmullaah il-Waahid is-Samad fee Hukm it-Taalib minal-Mayyitil-Madad* (pp. 47-96).

³ This biography was written by Shaykh Abu Usaamah Saleem al-Hilaalee in Ammaan, al-Balqaa, Jordan on the 27th of Muharram 1403 A.H.

⁴ The area containing Makkah and al-Madeenah.

“... then I was happy to come across the book market and some printing houses. There I came across an explanation of *al-Aqaa'id un-Nasafiyyah* of at-Tiftaazaanee, which I had already memorised due to the number of times I had studied it. But I found that this version had the chapter about rulership missing, so I inquired about that. It was said to me that it was because it contained the point that the ruler must be from the Quraysh and that the Khaleefah cannot be from other than them. So when this was noticed by Abul-Hudaa, the Shaykh of the Sultaan 'Abdul-Hameed, he informed the Sultaan that this was the reason for the opposition of the Arabs to the Turks, so this issue must be removed. So 'Abdul-Hameed ordered the chapter about rulership to be removed, so it was removed and the book was printed without it. When this became clear to me I foresaw the downfall of the Turks, and was greatly saddened.”

Then al-Ma'soomee travelled by steamship and passed by Izmir, Alexandria and Suez, finally arriving at Makkah on the eighth of Dhul-Hijjah 1323 A.H.

He performed Hajj and visited some of the scholars of the Hijaaz amongst them Shaykh Shu'ayb ibn 'Abdir-Rahmaan al-Maghribee al-Maaliqee, with whom he studied the two *Saheehs*, the *Muwatta* and *Mishkaat ul-Masabeeh* and he gave him his isnaad and permission to narrate from him. He also met a number of Soofee Shaykhs and al-Ma'soomee was affected by them and gave his pledge of allegiance to Shaykh Muhammad Ma'soomee ibn 'Abdir-Rasheed al-Mujaddidee an-Naqshabandee, who taught him the Soofee practises and ordered him to keep repeating the name of Allaah and to visualise the Shaykh whilst making dhikr. He then gave him permission to train followers, except that the heart of al-Ma'soomee was not content with these futilities. So he sought the aid of Allaah and began to study the source works of Tafseer and the source books of the Sunnah and their explanation.

Al-Ma'soomee witnessed the innovation of having four separate places of Prayer around the House of Allaah, and would see the Hanafee refusing to pray behind the Shaafi'ee, instead they would sit amongst the rows of people waiting for the Jamaa'ah of his own madhhab and likewise would the followers of all the other madhhabs. After living there for three years he visited the mosque of the Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam), where he met the scholars of al-Madeenah and studied under them.

Then he decided to travel to Shaam (Greater Syria), and met a number of leading scholars in Damascus.

It was in Damascus that he criticised the Soofee Mawlawee Shaykhs for their involvement in music, whirling dances, and use of the flute and the duff. He also criticised the Rifaa'iyyah al-Bitaa'ihiiyyah for their Satanic dhikrs and movements. Then he visited al-Aqsaa mosque and stayed there for a few days, from there he travelled to Egypt and stayed at al-Azhar University in Cairo. From Egypt he bought the works of Shaykh ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah and his student Ibn ul-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah.

He then set off to return to his family and began teaching in the school founded by his father and became engrossed in the works of Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn ul-Qayyim and Ibn

‘Abd al-Barr - rahimahumullaah - and the truth became clear to him. He was made a mufti of the Sharee’ah courts in 1328 A.H. This stage in the life of al-Ma’somee was a time of research and seeking the proofs for each matter, so he would compare books and weigh them according to the Book and Sunnah. Thus the correctness of the Salafee methodology became clear to him so he clung to it and began to write in refutation of the earlier and later blind-followers. The Deen was revived in the lands beyond the Tigris and the Salafee thought spread, so that the shrines, tombs and centres of pilgrimage, which were worshipped besides Allaah, were demolished.

Trials and Patient Perseverance:

In 1917 CE the Bolshevik Communist revolution took place causing many people to be deceived, leading them to go out carrying banners stating: “Laa Ilaaha IllAllaah Muhammadur-Rasoolullaah” and written underneath it was: “Freedom, Justice and Equality.”

They set up various Islaamic committees and courts, al-Ma’somee was chosen to head them, so he travelled to Moscow to take part in the council of Shaykhs and representatives. This state of affairs lasted only a few months until the red-cancer bared its fangs under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin who spread their evil and corruption throughout the land. They slaughtered the scholars and transported many thousands of them to the frozen north, where most of them died and some by the grace of Allaah were saved. Al-Ma’somee too was imprisoned in the year 1342 A.H. but released only to be imprisoned again in the year 1344 A.H., but again saved by Allaah, the Most High.

He then left Khajnadah and travelled to Margheeyaan whose people welcomed him, whilst the communists watched him closely. There he was made judge, but he resigned when he became unable to judge by the truth. However the trials and tribulations did not stop for him; he debated with the atheists in Tashkent in a large gathering of people and destroyed their arguments, but when he returned to Margheeyaan, the atheists attacked his house and looted everything in it, including more than a thousand gold guineas. Furthermore, they ordered his arrest and that he be shot, except that Allaah saved him from their plans and he was able to escape in 1928 CE, fleeing to China where he remained for a number of years.

He reached Makkah in 1354 A.H. and became a teacher in the Daar ul-Hadeeth. During the months of Hajj he would teach in Masjid ul-Haraam in the Turkish language and the Turkish pilgrims would attend these lessons. Through them he would send letters to his father and family, news of whom had ceased to reach him towards the end of his life. He died in the year 1380 A.H. - rahimahullaah - and may Allaah grant him a home in Paradise.

THE OBLIGATION OF REFERRING TO THE BOOK AND THE SUNNAH FOR JUDGMENT⁵

People were a single nation upon the religion of Aadam (alayhis-salaam) for fourteen generations then the devils dislodged and diverted them from their Deen and forbade for them what Allaah had made permissible. They disagreed and differed, so Allaah sent His Messengers in succession so that they would worship Allaah alone and so that His saying would be the deciding factor in any disagreement and the proof for this is the saying of Allaah, that,

“Mankind were one community and Allaah sent Prophets with glad tidings and warnings and with them He sent the Book in truth, to judge between people in matters wherein they differed.” [Sooratul-Baqarah (2): 213]

The Prophet Muhammad (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) came, after a gap in the succession of Prophets (alayhimus-salaam), to explain the Straight Way to the people and to guide them, by Allaah’s permission, in those matters of the truth about which they differed, to the Way of the Mighty and the One worthy of all praise. He, the Mighty and Majestic, says:

“We sent down the Book to you (O Muhammad sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) that you may make clear to them those things in which they differ and that it should be a guide and a mercy to those who believe.” [Sooratu-Nahl (16): 64]

This aayah confines the reason behind revelation which is that the Messenger’s duty is to proclaim the clear message. Therefore, the clear decisive aayaat come from Allaah ordering His Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) to follow what was revealed to Him. He, the Most High, says:

“O Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam)! Fear Allaah and obey not the disbelievers and the hypocrites. Verily Allaah is full of knowledge and wisdom. But follow that which has come to you by inspiration from your Lord: for Allaah is well acquainted with (all) that you do.” [Sooratul-Ahzaab (33):1-2]

“Follow what has been inspired to you from your Lord; None has the right to be worshipped but He and turn aside from those who join others in worship with Allaah.” [Sooratul-An’aam (6):106]

He says,

“Then we put you (O Muhammad) on the (right) Way of Religion, so follow you that and follow not the desires of those who know not.” [Sooratul-Jaathiyah (45):18]

⁵ Written by Shaykh Saleem al-Hilaalee.

The Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam), who knew Allaah, obeyed his Lord. Allaah witnessed to that saying:

“Nor does he speak of his own desire. It is no less than revelation sent down to him.” [Sooratun-Najm (53): 34]

From that which Allaah ordered His slave and His Messenger with, was that he should propagate and explain to the people that which was revealed to him by his Lord. He, the Most High, says:

“O Messenger! Proclaim that which has been sent to you from your Lord. If you did not, you would not have fulfilled and proclaimed His mission. Allaah will defend you from men (who mean mischief). For Allaah guides not those who reject faith.” [Sooratul-Maa’idah (5): 67]

The Messenger did indeed completely propagate all the revelation from his Lord without the slightest deficiency, Allaah bears witness to that and also the believers. Allaah says:

“This Day have I perfected your Religion for you, completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islaam as your Religion.” [Sooratul-Maa’idah (5): 3]

The Mother of the Believers, ‘Aa’ishah - radi-Allaahu ‘anhaa - said to Masrooq,

“Whoever says to you that Muhammad (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) kept secret anything sent down to him has lied.”⁶

All the Muslims upon the final Hajj when they were asked by the Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam),

“You will be questioned about me, so what will you say?”

They said,

‘We bear witness that you have fully conveyed the Revelation from your Lord, have done your duty and sincerely advised the Ummah and fulfilled that which was upon you.’

So he pointed with his forefinger and raised it towards the heavens and pointed it at the people and said,

*“O Allaah bear witness, O Allaah bear witness.”*⁷

Allaah ordered His Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) to follow the revelation and to propagate it to the people, to explain the revelation, so that they may judge by it in any dispute. Allaah is the One who knows fully the laws and regulations

⁶ Reported by al-Bukhaaree, Muslim, at-Tirmidhee and others.

⁷ Part of the Hadeeth of Jaabir - radi-Allaahu ‘anhu. Its various narrations have been collected by the Muhaddith Shaykh al-Albaanee in his book *Haajjat un-Nabee* p. 73.

which are fitting for His creation, for everything created is known best by its Creator and all humans are the creation of Allaah. So Allaah knows best the way in which their affairs will be set aright and kept in order. He, the Mighty and Majestic, says:

“Should He not know what He created? He is the most kind and Courteous (to His slaves), All-Aware (of everything).” [Sooratul-Mulk (67):14]

If He had left mankind to pass judgements upon actions and sayings themselves, then judgement would change from person to person and in different times and it is not possible for a human to pass a definite and unchanging ruling. Since that is the case, He has made it binding upon the servants to obey Him and to obey the Messenger and warned them against disobedience and placed the guidance in His Book and the Sunnah of His Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam). He, the Most High, says:

“It is not fit for a believer, man or woman, when Allaah and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision. Whosoever disobeys Allaah and His Messenger has indeed strayed in a plain manner.” [Sooratul-Ahzaab (33):36]

Allaah, the Most Perfect, says:

“He who obeys the Messenger has indeed obeyed Allaah.” [Sooratun-Nisaa (4):80]

“Say: Obey Allaah and obey the Messenger, but if you turn away, he is only responsible for the duty placed on him and you for that placed upon you. If you obey him, you shall be on right guidance. The Messenger’s duty is only to convey in a clear way.” [Sooratun-Noor (24):54]

The Messenger of Allaah (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) said,

*“He who obeys me enters Paradise and he who disobeys me has refused.”*⁸

The truthful and trustworthy Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) also said,

*“I have left amongst you two things. You will not go astray as long as you hold to them: The Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger.”*⁹

From what has preceded it becomes clear that it is obligatory to refer back in judgement to the Book and the Sunnah, if we desire the correct way. Allaah has ordered that matters be referred back to Him and His Messenger when there is a disagreement and difference, so that the final judgement is that of the Book and the Sunnah. He, the Mighty and Majestic, says:

⁸ Reported by al-Bukhaaree (Fath ul-Baaree: 13/249).

⁹ Reported by Maalik (2/899). See the checking of *al-Mishkaat*, (1/66) by Shaykh al-Albaanee.

“O you who believe! Obey Allaah and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority. If you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allaah and His Messenger, if you believe in Allaah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determinations.” [Sooratun-Nisaa (4):59]

This aayah explains that disputes and unknown matters are to be referred back to the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger so that the Muslims settle their disputes with them. This being a sign of truthfulness and the proof of Eemaan; while he who does not refer back in judgement to the Book and the Sunnah in disputes and take judgement from them then he is not a believer in Allaah and the Last Day. Perhaps the clearest proof of this great matter which is counted as the crux of Eemaan is His saying:

“But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith until they make you judge in all disputes between them and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions and accept (them) with full submissions.” [Sooratun-Nisaa (4):65]

Just this earth-rending oath is sufficient to cause the mountains to fall to the ground and for the believer’s jugular vein to tremble in terror and his limbs to shake with fear and for the hearts to rise to the throats and the eyes to roll up in their sockets. The Most Just of all judges has sworn by Himself that no one believes until he makes the Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) judge in all affairs. So whatever judgement he has passed then it is obligatory to submit to it, outwardly and inwardly, since it is the truth and what is there besides the truth except misguidance.¹⁰

This is the unrestricted authority; that no man-made law, custom, opinion of the elder of the tribe, saying of a man without a proof, any judgement reached by intellect or any personal experience is given precedence before Allaah and His Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam), who calls to that which gives them life. Rather, they should not turn aside, hesitate or delay; they should submit fully outwardly and inwardly. Anything less than that is lame and half-hearted submission leaning upon the walking stick of blind-following and opinions of men.

The Companions - radi-Allaahu ‘anhum - submitted themselves and the reins of their intellect to the truthful and trusted Messenger whilst they were indeed men of great wisdom and intellect. This because to the Messenger information came from the heavens and upon him the Qur’aan was sent down. He (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) knew its explanation due to that which Allaah showed him.

And whatever the Companions did then Allaah was pleased with them and they were pleased with Allaah. Then after them came the Taabi’een continuing upon this correct path and this straight way.

The affair continued in like manner for three generations; with scholars who were satisfied in this world with little. Thus, their hearts were free from any desire of position with a ruler and their souls were free from self-adoration. So they did not see

¹⁰ Tafseer Ibn Katheer. Tafseer of verses 59 and 85 of Sooratun-Nisaa.

their success except in worshipping their Lord. Their students took knowledge and wisdom from them in this agreeable atmosphere. Their hearts and minds were therefore cleansed from following desires and from obstinate refusal of following the Hadeeth of the Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam), about which none of the creation have excuse and there is no escape from following the Sunnah of the chosen one.

When they saw the ruling for a matter in the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam), then they would cling to that. If they did not (find the ruling in the Book or the Sunnah) then they would look for the ijmaa’¹¹ of the Ummah, since it does not unite upon misguidance

This saying is based upon the Hadeeth,

*“Indeed Allaah will never unite this Ummah upon misguidance.”*¹²

If they could not find the ijmaa’, then they would compare it (the matter) against the Book and the Sunnah using qiyaas¹³ and would strive hard to arrive at the Sharee’ah ruling by deduction (this is the process called Ijtihad). So in this, some of them arrived at what was correct and others erred but were still deserving of reward.

The Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) said,

“Whoever makes a reasoned decision (Ijtihad) and is correct will receive two rewards, while he who does so and is incorrect will receive one reward.”¹⁴

And they had excuses due to many reasons. Imaam ash-Shaafi’ee - rahimahullaah - summarised in excellent terms in *ar-Risaalah* (p.219), saying,

“As for contradicting an established Hadeeth from Allaah’s Messenger, then I hope that we cannot be charged with that, if Allaah wills. And that (contradicting an authentic Hadeeth) is not allowed for anyone, but that one is ignorant of something from the Sunnah and may therefore hold a saying contrary to it; not knowingly opposing it and a person may also overlook and make mistakes in interpretation.”

These reasons are also set out by Shaykh ul-Islaam (Ibn Taymiyyah) in *Raf ul-Malaam ‘anil-A’immat il-A’laam*, where he quoted the excuses for these great scholars, saying,

“Know that there is not a single one of the great scholars, who were acceptable to the Ummah in general, who deliberately conflicted with the Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) in anything from his Sunnah

¹¹ Ijmaa’: The unanimous agreement of the Sahaabah or scholars in general, on a point of Islaamic law.

¹² Reported by at-Tirmidhee (no.2269).

¹³ Qiyaas: Analogical deduction of Islaamic laws, by which new laws are deduced from earlier laws based on similarities between their causes.

¹⁴ Collected in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree (English trans. vol. 9, p.330, no.450) and Sunan Abu Daawood, (vol. 3, p.1013-4, no.3567).

be it small or great. Since all of them definitely agreed upon the obligation of following the Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam).

As for the sayings of any man, some are taken and some are to be rejected, except for Allaah’s Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam). But if a saying of any of them is found to conflict with an authentic Hadeeth, then the scholar must be excused for not having followed it and the excuses are of three types:

1. Not believing that the Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) said it.
2. Not believing that this matter is what is referred to in that Hadeeth.
3. Believing the ruling to have been abrogated.

These three classes branch off into many reasons.”

But this excuse of the Imaam is not an excuse for his students when the truth becomes clear or is explained to them and this is affirmed by the sayings reported from the four Imaams explaining their position regarding the blind-following of them and that they disassociated themselves from that. This was due to their knowledge and piety since they indicated that they had not comprehended all of the Sunnah.

Their students have reported various sayings from them, with different wordings; all affirming one thing: that it is obligatory to act upon the Hadeeth when it is found to be authentic and to abandon blind-following of the opinions of men which conflict with it. Such as the saying of Abu Haneefah - rahimahullaah - when he said to Abu Yoosuf - rahimahullaah,

“Woe to you! O Abu Ya’qoob. Do not write down everything which you hear from me, for I may hold an opinion one day, then abandon it the next, then hold an opinion and abandon it the following day.”¹⁵

The like of this is also established from the rest of the Imaams and they all agreed that,

“If the Hadeeth is authentic, then that is their madhhab.”

Ibn Hazm - rahimahullaah - said,

“The scholars whom they blindly follow have rejected blind-following and forbade their companions from blindly following them.”¹⁶

Therefore, the followers of the Imaams did not accept all their sayings. Rather, they abandoned many of them when it became clear that the truth and the Sunnah was made clear to them. So the two Imaams Abu Yoosuf and Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ash-Shaibaanee differed with Imaam Abu Haneefah in a third of the entire madhhab.¹⁷

¹⁵ Reported by Abbaas and ad-Dooree in al-Tareekh by Ibn Mu’een, vol.6, p.88. See The Prophet’s Prayer Described by Shaykh al-Albaanee (p. ix).

¹⁶ *Al-Ihkaam fee Usool il-Ahkaam* (6/118).

¹⁷ *Haashiyah lbn ‘Aabideen* (1/62), Istanbul edition. This point will be discussed later in detail.

This was also the practice of some of the later people, despite their being ascribed to a madhhab. This did not prevent them from differing with the madhhab when they knew of a proof which contradicted what the head of the madhhab held. For example, an-Nawawee who contradicted ash-Shaafi'ee with regard to making wudhoo from eating camel meat.¹⁸

However, people from the later generations closed the doors of Ijtihaad and made the Blind-Following of their Imaam obligatory on the people. The author of *Taqleed and Ijtihaad* writes, under the heading "Taqleed Restricted to the Four Madhhabs":

"It was realised from the exposition of the Wujoob of Taqleed that adoption of different verdicts leads to anarchy. It is therefore, imperative to make Taqleed of a Madhhab which has been so formulated and arranged in regard to principles (Usool) and details (Furoo') that answers to all questions could be obtained... thereby obviating the need to refer to an external source. This all-embracing quality, by an act of Allaah, is found existing in only the four madhhabs. It is therefore, imperative to adopt one of four Madhhabs."¹⁹

The Pious Predecessors regarded blind-following as submission of one's will to others and the blind acceptance of their opinions to be matters which Islaam rejected and censured and it is not fitting for any Muslim, male or female, to do this except in cases of necessity.

Therefore Ijtihaad cannot be turned into something foreign to the life of the Ummah when it used to be the norm?! Many factors have lead to this dreadful reversal in thought, which has disfigured peoples' thinking and turned their heads away. There is no doubt that the Deen is not amongst these factors. Rather the common denominator between these factors is built upon political considerations, since many rulers feared Ijtihaad which represents the peak of free thought, within Islaamic principles. So some of the rulers did not forget the trouble caused to them through Ijtihaad. Did not the fatwa of Imaam Maalik - rahimahullaah - deal a blow to the position of the Abbasid Khulafaa, when he gave the ruling that divorce pronounced under duress is invalid? It was this form of divorce which was introduced by the Abbasids to secure the peoples' adherence to their pledge of allegiance and they wished to make the people follow particular madhhabs but this was opposed and criticised by the scholars for they did not fear anyone but Allaah. Al-Mansoor wanted to make the people follow the madhhab of Maalik and Imaam Maalik himself was one of the first to reject that, saying,

"O Chief of the believers! Do not do that, because the people have previous sayings and have heard Hadeeth and narrations. So each people have accepted what came to them and acted upon it and have accepted what they found from differences between the Companions of Allaah's Messenger and others. To turn them away from that which they believe is

¹⁸ *Al-Majmoo'* (2/58 60) and *Sharh Saheeh Muslim* (4/4849).

¹⁹ Muhammad Maseehullah Khan Sherwani's *Taqleed and Ijtihaad* p.13.

very difficult, so leave the people as they are and what the people of each land choose for themselves.”²⁰

Then after these noble men came scholars, who responded to the wishes of the rulers, since their concern slackened and their resolve weakened because they merely stuck to that which they had learnt in childhood without any eagerness for it. Rather they were happy to eat the crumbs dropped from the table by those before them. Their own incapacity fooled them into thinking that the Ummah of Muhammad (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) became barren after the fourth century and in this manner the rulers who feared Ijtihaad attained their wish. Through the inability of the scholars and ignorance of the commoners, the gates of Ijtihaad were closed.

Ibn Khaldoon said,

“When it was feared that (ijtihaad) would be attributed to those who were not befitting and to those whose opinion was not to be relied upon, they stated that it was something that people were now incapable of. Instead they turned them to blind-following and warned from accepting from more than one Imaam since that would be to make a game of it. So nothing remained except for the madhhab to be passed on and for each blind-follower to stick to his own madhhab. And after the Madhhab’s principles had been settled and its ascription affirmed by narration, there is no means of attaining fiqh today except through their way. The claim of ijtihaad today is rejected and is not followed and the people of Islaam today blindly follow these four Imaams.”²¹

If we analyse the arguments of those who prevent ijtihaad, we do not find in it, from the day they closed its gate to this day a single proof from the Sharee’ah, neither from the Book, nor the Sunnah nor ijmaa’. (We find) nothing except their saying that their scholars closed the gates of ijtihaad fearing that this Ummah would fall into error and misunderstandings. They would be mislead by following claimants of ijtihaad who did not have the required knowledge and piety for that and so corrupt the Deen and play with its rulings and cause anarchy within the Deen. Shaykh Muhammad al-Haamid says,

“But in order to prevent those claimants of ijtihaad, who are not from its people and the resulting widespread religious anarchy, just as occurred with the nations before us, the pious scholars decided to close this gate as a mercy for the Ummah, so that it would not fall into error and misunderstandings.”^{22 23}

²⁰ *Al-Intiqaa’ fee Fadlith-Thalaathatil-A’immatil-Fuqaha* of Ibn ‘Abd ul-Barr (p. 41) and *al-Madkhal fee al-Ta’reef bil-Fiqh al-Islaamee* of Muhammad Shalabee.

²¹ *Muqaddimah Ibn Khaldoon* (p. 448).

²² *Luzoom Ittibaa’ Madhaahib il-Aimmah* of Muhammad al-Haamid (p. 10).

²³ This concern is unjustified because Allaah has promised to protect the Deen, and He Alone will provide for the means of its protection, as the Messenger of Allaah said,

“This Ilm (Deen) will be carried by the trustworthy ones of each generation. Negating from it the tahreef (alterations) of the ones going beyond bounds, the false assumptions of the liars, and the ta’weel (false interpretations of the ignorant).” [Reported by al-Baihaaqee and Authenticated by al-Albaanee in *Mishkaat* no.248]

This saying has no share of the truth and if it had the weight of a mustard seed of truth in it then Allaah would have guided us to it, since He knows whatever is beneficial to the people in their Deen and worldly affairs; likewise He knows better what will harm them. Therefore, He did not leave a major or minor matter from their lives except He included it in an order or a prohibition and this was conveyed by Allaah's Messenger (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) without any addition or deletion.

He (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) said,

*"I have not left anything which Allaah has ordered you with except that I have ordered you with it, nor have I left anything which He forbade you except that I have forbidden you from it."*²⁴

Can it be imagined that Allaah knows of a great danger and widespread evil which will encompass the Muslims from one time to the next and cause anarchy within the Deen, thereby leaving none unaffected and cause the Muslims to run around in disarray and that He would not inform them of what awaited them and warn them? How far is He from that!

"Your Lord is never forgetful" [Soorah Maryam (19):64]

It is enough for you, O Muslim to know that Allaah knew that a danger would confront a single generation of the Muslims before the Last Hour. The danger (Fitnah) of the greater Dajjaal and so He warned all of the Muslims through the last of His Prophets (alayhimus-salaam) and Messengers. In fact every Prophet warned his nation about the one-eyed liar.

The Messenger of Allaah (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) said,

*"There was not a Prophet except that he warned his nation about the one-eyed liar; indeed he is one-eyed and your Lord is not one-eyed and there is written between the place of his eyes Kaafir (or disbeliever)."*²⁵

The Prophet Muhammad (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam), however informed his nation about the details unknown to the previous nations. He (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) said,

*"Shall I not inform you of something about the Dajjaal which no Prophet told his people; indeed he is one-eyed and will bring the like of the Paradise and the Fire, so that which he says is Paradise is the Fire."*²⁶

²⁴ Reported by ash-Shaafi'ee in his *Sunan* (1/14) and *ar-Risaalah* (p. 87 and 93), al-Baihaaqee quotes it in his *Sunan* (7/76) from ash-Shaafi'ee. Reported also by al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee in *al-Faqeeh wal-Mutafaqqih* (1/93) and by at-Tabaraanee. It is declared Saheeh by Shaykh al-Albaanee due to its chains and by Shaykh Ahmad Shaakir in his notes in *ar-Risaalah*.

²⁵ Reported by al-Bukhaaree (Fath ul-Baaree: 13/91), Muslim (*Sharh Saheeh Muslim* of an-Nawawee: 18/59) and at-Tirmidhee (Shaakir: 4/156)

²⁶ Reported by al-Bukhaaree (Fath ul-Baaree: 13/90) and Muslim (*Sharh Saheeh Muslim* of an-Nawawee: 18/62).

This misfortune which will be faced by a single generation of the Muslims has so many Hadeeth reported about it that they reach the level of being mutawaatir.²⁷ So how is it that we do not find in the Sunnah of the chosen one, a single mention of this alleged anarchy within the religion which is supposed to remove the Muslims from the pure guidance?! Does this not indicate that this is in fact forging lies about the Deen of Allaah and speaking falsely about Allaah and lying upon Allaah's Messenger (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam)? Bearing in mind that this alleged error and misunderstanding which it is said would be caused by opening the door of ijtihaad and its continuance throughout the ages would be a greater trial than that of the Dajjaal.

This mistake is rebutted by the saying of the Messenger (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam),

*"There is not from the creation of Aadam to the establishment of the Hour a creation (and in a wording: a matter) more serious than the Dajjaal."*²⁸

'Amr ibn Qays as-Salkoonee reports from 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr who said,

"I went out with my father in a deputation to Mu'aawiyah, and I heard a man narrating to the people, saying, 'From the signs of the Hour is that the wicked will be raised in position and the good lowered and that action will be concealed and sayings manifested and that Mathnaat are read amongst the people and none amongst them tries to change or criticise them.' It was said, 'What are Mathnaat?' He said, 'Those things which are written besides the Book of Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic.'"²⁹

²⁷ A hadeeth that is reported by a group of people in every stage of its chain of narration (Sanaad). For details, see the course's section on hadeeth.

²⁸ Reported by Muslim (*Sharh Saheeh Muslim* of an-Nawawee: 18/86) and Ahmad. Imaam an-Nawawee said, "What is meant is causing more trial and having greater strength."

²⁹ Reported by al-Haakim (4/554-555) who said, "Its isnaad is Saheeh" and adh-Dhahabee agreed and so does al-Albaanee who said, "Even though it is mawqoof but still it has the ruling of being marfoo', since it is an affair of the Unseen, something which cannot be spoken about from opinion."

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

All praise is for Allaah who guided us to Islaam and Eemaan and granted us understanding of the meaning of His Book, the Qur'aan and the understanding of the Hadeeth of His Messenger, the best amongst men and jinn, (May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon the Prophet Muhammad as long as the night and day last), and Who made it easy for us to follow the path of the noble Companions and those who follow them in righteousness.

Abu 'Abdul-Kareem Muhammad Sultan al-Ma'soom al-Khajnadee al-Makkee, the humble servant, needs the benevolence of His All-Powerful Lord. May Allaah help him to act upon His Book and to cling to the Sunnah of the Messenger and grant him a good end.

A question has been put forward to me from the Muslims of the land of Japan, from the cities of Tokyo and Osaka, in the far-east, which is as follows:

What is the true sense of the religion of Islaam?

What does madhhab mean?

Does everyone who is honoured with the Deen of Islaam have to join one of the four madhhabs? That is to be a Maalikee, Hanafee, Shaafi'ee or Hanbalee, or other than that, or is that not binding?

There have been great differences and much argumentation here. When a number of enlightened thinkers of Japan wished to enter into Islaam and to be honoured with Eemaan and so that was put to a Muslim organisation in Tokyo. A group of people from India said that they would have to choose the madhhab of Imaam Abu Haneefah, since he was the Lamp of the Ummah³⁰, whilst a group of Indonesians from Java said that they must become Shaafi'ees!

³⁰ The game of blind-following of madhhabs has played a large role in the spread of fabricated ahaadeeth. Hanafee blind-followers have fabricated various ahaadeeth about the merits of Abu Haneefah an-Nu'maan - rahimahullaahu ta'alaa - from amongst them:

"There will be in my Ummah a man called Muhammad ibn Idrees ash-Shaafi'ee who is more harmful to my Ummah than Iblees; and there will be in my Ummah a man called Abu Haneefah, he is the lamp of my Ummah." [See Lisan ul-Meezaan of Ibn Hajr (5/7-8), Tadreeb ur-Raawee of as-Suyootee (1/277-278), Tanzeeh ush-Sharee'ah of Ibn 'Arraq (2/30) and Tareekh Baghdaad of al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee (5/309). Al-Khateeb and al-Haakim have declared this report as a fabrication (moudoo), and the one who is charged with having fabricated it, is Muhammad ibn Sa'eed al-Boorqee. Also see al-Fawaa'id al-Majmoo'ah, Beirut: Maktaba al-Islaamee, p.320, no.1226].

Khateeb collected another report through Anas in which the Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) was allegedly quoted as saying,

"There will come after me a man called an-Nu'maan ibn Thaabit, pet-named Abe Haneefah. Allaah's religion and my Sunnah will be revived by him." [It has in its chain of narrators Ahmad al-Juwaybaaree, a known fabricator of Hadeeth and Muhammad ibn Yazeed as-Salamee, whose narrations are classified unacceptable (Matrouk) by Hadeeth scholars. 'Alee ibn 'Iraaq, Tanzeeh ash-Sharee'ah al-Marfoo'ah Beirut: Daar al-Kutub al-'Ilmeeyah, 1979, vol.2, p.30, no.10]

When the Japanese heard this, they were very surprised and thought again. The question of madhhabs became an obstacle in their way of becoming Muslims!

So, our teacher, we should like to hear from your knowledge, that which will be a cure for this illness and poison, if Allaah wills. We hope that you can explain the true state of affairs so that our hearts may become calm and our chests open to the cure for ignorance, for which you will receive reward from Allaah, the Most High and thanks from us, the muhaajireen from Russia.

May Allaah send peace upon you and upon all those who follow the guidance.

Muhammad ‘Abdul-Hayy Qoor Baali’ee, and Muhsin Jaabaak Aughtlee
Muharram 1357 A.H., Tokyo, Japan.

These fabricated Hadeeth oppose the clear text of the Qur’aan since the Lamp of the Ummah is beyond doubt the Prophet Muhammad (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam), as Allaah, the Perfect and Exalted, describes him in His Book:

“O Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam)! Verily, We have sent you as a witness and a bearer of glad tidings and a warner and as one who invites to Allaah by His leave and as a lamp spreading light.” [Sooratul-Ahzaab :45-46]

So look how the blind-followers bestow upon their Imaams the characteristics of the infallible Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam). Therefore not clinging to a madhhab is the origin, due to the difference between following one who is infallible and following someone fallible since he who blindly-follows a particular madhhab has made following the Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) the same as following a scholar who is sometimes correct and sometimes in error.

1. THE REALITY OF EEMAAN AND ISLAAM

There is no ability, nor action except by the will of Allaah, the most High, the Sublime. My answer is:

You should know that many of the people of Islaam, their scholars³¹, not to speak of their ignorant ones claim that a Muslim has to follow one of the four madhhabs which

³¹ The author's - rahimahullaah - reference to the blind-followers as being people of knowledge is a matter for discussion, since knowledge is the realisation which comes from a proof, without proof it is merely blind-following.

Ibn ul-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah - rahimahullaah - says in his *Nooniyyah*,

“Knowledge is a realisation of the guidance with its proof; that and blind-following are not equal.”

Imaam Muhammad ibn Idrees ash-Shaafi'ee- rahimahullaah - said in *ar-Risaalah* (p.39),

“It is not permissible for anyone to ever say about anything that it is halaal or haraam except upon knowledge. This knowledge is what is related in the Book, or the Sunnah, or ijmaa' or qiyaas.”

The great scholar al-Fulaanee - rahimahullaah - said in *Eeqaaz Hamam Oolil-Absaar* (p.25),

“So these ahaadeeth and reports clearly show that the word knowledge refers only to what is in Allaah's Book, the Sunnah of Allaah's Messenger , the ijmaa' and what is gained by qiyaas upon these sources, when a text cannot be found, in the view of those who hold that. It does not refer to what the blind-followers and people of bigotry regard as knowledge, as they restrict knowledge to refer to that which is written in the books of the opinions of the madhhabs, even though some of them clash with the Prophetic ahaadeeth.”

Therefore the true scholar ('Aalim) who is referred to by the aayaat and ahaadeeth concerning the excellence of knowledge is the mujtahid who strives to extract from the proofs contained in the Guidance. As for the blind-follower (muqallid) then he is not a scholar and the scholars throughout the ages have agreed to this.

Ash-Shaabbee - rahimahullaah - clearly says in his *Muwaafiqaat* (4/293),

“The muqallid is not a scholar.”

In the same way as-Suyootee - rahimahullaah - said,

“The muqallid is not called a scholar.” [Reported from him by Abul-Hasan as-Sindee al-Hanafee - rahimahullaah - in his explanatory notes to *Sunan Ibn Maajah* (1/70)]

It occurs in the books of fiqh of the Hanafees that it is not permissible for the ignorant to attain the post of judge. Ibn ul-Hammaam - rahimahullaah - explained the ignorant to be the blind-follower. [*Fath ul-Qadeer*, 5/456]

The same was said by Ibraaheem ibn al-Wazeer - rahimahullaah - in *Raudat ul-Baasim* (1/36),

“There is no doubt that the muftee, who is a blind-follower, is not called a scholar.”

At-Tahaawee - rahimahullaah - said,

are attributed to the Imaams - rahimahumullaah, such as Abu Haneefah, Maalik, ash-Shaafi'ee and Ahmad. That is a mistake; rather it is ignorance³² and a lack of knowledge of Islaam as it is reported in the authentic and famous Hadeeth of Jibreel:

Jibreel asked Allaah's Messenger (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) about Islaam, so the Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) replied, "*That you testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allaah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah and - you establish Prayer and give the Zakaah and you fast in Ramadaan and you make pilgrimage to the House if you are able.*" He then asked, 'What is Eemaan?' So the Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) replied, "*That you believe in Allaah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day and that you believe in pre-destination, its good and its bad.*" The questioner asked, 'What is al-Ihsaan?' The Messenger of Allaah (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) said, "*Al-Ihsaan is that you worship Allaah, the Most High, as*

"None blindly follows except an ignorant person or a bigoted partisan." [Reported from him by Ibn 'Aabideen in *Rasm al-Muftee* (1/32), from his *Majmoo' tur-Rasaa'il* and also reported from him by Ibn Hajr al-'Asqalaanee in his biography in *al-Lisaan*.]

Ibn 'Abd ul-Barr - rahimahullaah - reports in his *Jaami'* (2/119), that there is ijmaa' about that, saying,

"The scholars have agreed that, that which is not clear and certain is not knowledge... and there is no disagreement between the different scholars regarding the error of taqleed, so there is no need to go into that further."

Ibn Qayyim - rahimahullaah - agreed to that in *A'laam ul-Muwaqqi'een* (1/7) after having quoted it in full on p.26.

The sayings of the scholars which you have in front of you have as their proof the saying of the Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) in the authentic Hadeeth reported by al-Bukhaaree, Muslim, at-Tirmidhee, Ibn Maajah, Ahmad. Ad-Daarimee and al-Humaydee, from the narration of 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas:

"Verily Allaah does not take away knowledge by snatching it away from the servants, but he takes away knowledge by taking away the scholars, until when no scholar remains; the people take ignorant ones as leaders, so they are asked and give judgements without knowledge (and in the report of al-Bukhaaree) So they give judgment according to their opinion and they go astray and lead others astray."

In this is a clear sign that those who deserve the elevated title of Scholar are very few throughout the ages.

³² This is as ash-Shawkaanee - rahimahullaah - clearly stated it in *Irshaad al-Fahool* (p.267), saying,

"Since taqleed (blind-following) is ignorance, not knowledge."

Muhammad ibn 'Alee ash-Shawkaanee (1757-1835 CE) born near the town of Shawkaan in Yemen, was also among the reformers of this period. Ash-Shawkaanee studied Fiqh according to the Zaydee Madhhab and became one of its outstanding scholars. He then went into an in-depth study of the science of Hadeeth and subsequently became the most famous scholar of Hadeeth of his time. At this point he freed himself of the Madhhab and began making independent Ijtihaad. He wrote a number of works in Fiqh and its fundamentals in which issues studied from the points of view of all the Madhhabs were concluded with solutions based solely on the most accurate proofs and the most convincing arguments. Imaam ash-Shawkaanee took the position that Taqleed was Haraam and wrote a number of books on the topic, for example, *Al-Qawl al-Mufeed fee Hukm at-Taqleed*. Consequently, he also came under attack from most of the scholars of his time. [Muhammad ibn 'Alee ash-Shawkaanee, *Nayl al-Awtaar*, vol.1, p.3-6]

if you were seeing Him and even though you do not see Him, verily He sees you.”³³

In the Hadeeth of ‘Abdullaah ibn ‘Umar (radi-Allaahu ‘anhumaa) that the Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) said:

*“Islam is built upon five: The testification that none has the right to be worshipped but Allaah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah and establishment of Prayer and giving Zakaah and the Fast of Ramadaan and pilgrimage to the House for him who is able to do so.”*³⁴

Abu Hurayrah (radi-Allaahu ‘anhu) reports that:

“A man came and said, ‘O Messenger of Allaah! Guide me to an action by which, if I do it, I will enter Paradise.’ So he (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) said, *“That you testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allaah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah, that you establish Prayer, pay the Zakaah and fast Ramadaan.”* So the questioner said, ‘By Him in whose Hand is my life! I will not do any more or less than that.’ Allaah’s Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) said, *“He has succeeded if he has spoken the truth.”*”³⁵

Anas (radi-Allaahu ‘anhu) reports:

“We were with the Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) in the mosque when a man upon a camel entered, he made the camel kneel and tied it in the mosque and then said, ‘Which of you is Muhammad?’ The Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) was reclining amongst them, so someone said, ‘That white man who is reclining.’ So the man said to him, ‘Ibn ‘Abdul Muttalib?’ The Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) said, *“I have answered to you.”* So the man said to the Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam), ‘I will ask you something which may be hard upon you, so do not feel anything against me. ‘He (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) said, *“Ask whatever you wish.”* So he said, ‘I ask you by your Lord and the Lord of those before you, has Allaah sent you for all of the people?’ He (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) said, *“O Allaah, yes!”* He said, ‘I ask you by Allaah, has Allaah ordered you to fast this month from the year?’ He (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) said, *“O Allaah, yes!”* He said, ‘I ask you by Allaah, has Allaah ordered you to take this charity from our rich and to distribute it amongst the poor?’ So the Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) said, *“O Allaah, yes!”* The man said, ‘I have believed in that which you came with, I am a messenger sent by my

³³ Part of the authentic Hadeeth reported by al-Bukhaaree (1/114, 8/513), Muslim (1/164), Ahmad, Ibn Maajah (1/25) and an-Nasaa’ee (8/101).

³⁴ Saheeh: reported by al-Bukhaaree (1/49), Muslim (1/176-177), an-Nasaa’ee (8/107-108), at-Tirmidhee (5/5-6), al-Baihaaqee (4/199) and al-Humaydee (2/308).

³⁵ Saheeh: reported by al-Bukhaaree (3/261), Muslim (1/174), Ahmad and an-Nasaa’ee (4/122, 8/118). Those who explain this Hadeeth say that he did not mention Hajj because it had not been made obligatory then. See *al-Fath*, 3/265.

people, I am Dammaam ibn Tha'labah, the brother of Banu Sa'd ibn Bakr.”³⁶

So this is the Islaam with which Allaah ordered His servants and sent Muhammad (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) to explain.

³⁶ Saheeh: reported by al-Bukhaaree (1/148), an-Nasaa’ee (4/122-123), Ibn Maajah (1/449) and Ahmad.

2. BLIND-FOLLOWING OF A MADHHAB, NEITHER OBLIGATORY NOR RECOMMENDED

As for the madhhabs³⁷, they are the opinions of the scholars, their understanding as regards certain problems and their deductions. Allaah, the Most High, did not make it obligatory to follow these opinions, deductions and understandings, nor did His Messenger, since they contain that which is correct and that which is incorrect. There is nothing that is totally correct except that which is established from Allaah's Messenger (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) and very often the Imaams would make a pronouncement in a matter and then the truth would come to their attention, being at variance with that, so they would retract from their saying!

So he who wishes to enter the Deen of Islaam and to be honoured by the honour of Eemaan, then he has only to bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped but Allaah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah and to establish the five Prayers, to pay Zakaah, to fast in the month of Ramadaan and to make Hajj to the House if he is able.

As for following one of the four madhhabs or any other madhhab, then that is neither obligatory nor recommended and it is not binding for a Muslim to follow any one of them in particular. Rather he who follows one of them in particular, in every matter, then he is a mistaken sectarian and a blind-follower. He is one of those who split up their Deen and become sects and Allaah, the Most High, has forbidden splits within the Deen:

“Verily, those who divide their religion and break up into sects, you (O Muhammad sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) have no concern in them in the least.” [Sooratul-An’aam (6):159]

³⁷ The Definition of Blind Following (i.e. *Taqleed*): Linguistically, it means, “Placing something around the neck, which encircles the neck.” Technically it means, “Following the one whose saying in itself is not a hujjah (proof).” This term is used generally, to refer to the unquestionable following of one of the four madhhabs in all affairs (i.e. the Shaafi’ee, Hanbalee, Maalikee or Hanafee).

Following the teachings of the Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) and following the Ijmaa (consensus) of the Sahaabah (Companions) are excluded from the saying: ‘Following he whose saying in itself is not a proof, for their sayings are indeed proof (as has already been established earlier) and are defined as Ittibaa.’

From this we know that,

1. Taqleed is not useful knowledge.
2. A common Muslim may take fiqh (rulings) upon the understanding and the sayings of all the scholars. In those issues in which a common Muslim cannot make up his mind, he may follow and rely upon the opinion of any of the Mujtahid, until an opinion based on stronger proofs is shown to him.

A Muslim is therefore not obliged to restrict himself to a specific madhhab (i.e. a position held by a Mujtahid on a particular issue) because no madhhab is completely infallible. The Mujtahid is the one who does Ijtihaad (i.e. the reasoning process by which the Islaamic law is deduced after thorough research). A Muslim is free to move from one madhhab to another, due to the strength of the evidence (in a particular point). All the scholars of Hadeeth (the Muhadditheen) have the right to Ijtihaad (therefore the number of Mujtahids is not restricted to four).

“Be not of those who worship others along with Allaah; of those who split up their religion and became sects, each sect rejoicing in that which is with it.” [Sooratur-Room (30): 31-32]

Islaam is a single Deen and there are no madhhabs or ways therein, which one is obligated to follow except for the way of Muhammad, the Messenger of Allaah (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) and his guidance.

“Say (O Muhammad sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam): This is my way; I invite unto Allaah, with sure knowledge. I and whosoever follows me (also must invite others to Allaah) with sure knowledge. Glorified and Exalted be Allaah. I am not of the Mushrikeen (those who worship others along with Allaah).” [Soorah Yoosuf (12):108]

Many differences have sprung up between the blind-followers of these madhhabs, without knowledge! Allaah, the Most High, says:

“Do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart and be patient. Surely, Allaah is with those who are Patient” [Sooratul-Anfaal (8): 46]

Allaah, the Great, says, ordering us to unite and cling together:

“Hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allaah (i.e. this Qur’aan) and be not divided amongst yourselves.” [Soorah Aal’-Imraan (3):103]

3. THE BASIS OF THE DEEN OF ISLAAM IS ACTION ACCORDING TO THE BOOK AND THE SUNNAH

This is the Deen of Islaam in truth and its fundamental and its basis is the Book and the Sunnah. So they are the points of reference in every dispute that the Muslims fall into and he who refers back to other than them is not a believer! As Allaah the Most High says:

“But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith, until they make you (O Muhammad) judge in all disputes between them and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions and accept (them) with full submissions” [Sooratun-Nisaa (4): 65]

Not one of the scholars said, ‘follow me in my opinion rather they said ‘take from where we have taken,’ besides, much has been added to these madhhabs from the understanding of their later generations.³⁸

They contain many errors and matters of conjecture, which if the Imaams to whom they are attributed were to see them, then they would absolve themselves of them and from those who said them.

For example, the Maalikees leave their arms at their side, during the Salaah and read Qunoot in Fajr, whereas we find Maalik - rahimahullaah - quotes in *al-Muwatta*: “Chapter: Placing the two hands; one upon the other in Prayer.” He reported narrations therein, from them: That ‘Abdul Kareem ibn Abil Makhaariq al-Basaree said,

“From the sayings of Prophethood is: If you feel no shame. Then do as you wish: placing the hands one upon the other in Prayer; being early in breaking the fast; and delaying taking the pre-dawn meal (suhoor).”³⁹

³⁸ The following of madhhabs has not only led the blind-followers to prefer the sayings and opinions of men to the clear texts of the Qur’aan and Sunnah, it has further taken them even to forget the authentic sayings of their own Imaams - rahimahumullaah - preferring the sayings of the later followers, thinking that they are the madhhab of the scholars, without discrimination or research and that is due only to the severity of their blind-following. It is known that the scholars wrote down their positions in books and left what they regarded to be correct according to their own ijtihad. Imaam Maalik - rahimahullaah - left his position in *al-Muwatta* and Imaam ash-Shaafi’ee left his position in *al-Umm*. If we wish to know the madhhab of any of those scholars we have to refer back to his book. It is not fitting that we seek it in other than his book; as an explanation of what is often reported as being the saying of Imaam Maalik, Imaam Ash-Shaafi’ee and Imaam Abu Haneefah - rahimahumullaah - which they never said or did.

³⁹ But the later Maalikees use as evidence that Maalik used to pray with his hands hanging at his side, this is ignorance with regard to the madhhab which they follow. Since Ja’far ibn Sulaymaan, the governor of al-Madeenah lashed the Imaam in the year 146A.H. and stretched out his arms until his hands became dislocated and so he was not able to place his hands one over the other in Prayer. (See *al-Intiqaa*, p.44) He wrote *al-Muwatta* two years after this happened. Imaam Maalik also reports in the chapter of the Qunoot in Fajr Prayer (1/159) that,

“Ibn ‘Umar (radi-Allaahu ‘anhu) did not read the Qunoot in any of his prayers.”

As for Imaam ash-Shaafi’ee - rahimahullaah - then it is ignorantly attributed to him that he holds the Salaah upon the Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) to be a Sunnah whereas he says in *al-Umm*

All of the people of knowledge from the Pious Predecessors clung to the manifest texts of the Book and the Sunnah and encouraged the people to stick to them and act accordingly. This is established from the Imaams from amongst them: Abu Haneefah, Maalik, Ahmad, ash-Shaafi'ee, the two Sufyaans, ath-Thawree and Ibn 'Uyaynah, al-Hasan al-Basree, Abu Yoosuf Ya'qoob - the Qaadee, Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ash-Shaybaanee, 'Abdur-Rahmaan al-Awzaa'ee, 'Abdullaah ibn al-Mubaarak, al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and the rest, rahimahumullaah ta'aalaa . All of them warned against innovations in the Deen and against blind-following of anyone except the infallible Messenger (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam). As for other than him, then he is fallible whoever he may be, his saying which is accordance with the Book and the Sunnah is accepted and that which goes against them is to be rejected. As Imaam Maalik - rahimahullaah - said, "The saying of everyone may be taken or rejected, except for the companion of this grave," and he pointed to the grave of the Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam)"⁴⁰

The scholars, the four Imaams and the others, all followed this way, all of them warned against blind-following! Since Allaah, the Most High, condemned the blind-followers in more than one place in His Book. Most of the earlier and later people became disbelievers due to their blind-following of their priests, rabbis, old people and forefathers. It is established from Imaams Abu Haneefah, Maalik, ash-Shaafi'ee, Ahmad and others - rahimahumullaah - that they said:

(1/117) that it is obligatory: "Allaah, the Most High, made obligatory the Salaah upon His Messenger saying:

"Allaah and the angels send Salaah upon the Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam); O you who believe send Salaah upon him and greet him with respect."
[Sooratul-Ahzaab (33): 56]

There is no place which has more right for that to be obligatory therein than within the Prayer. We find proof from Allaah's Messenger that Salaah upon His Messenger is obligatory in Prayer and Allaah, the Most High, knows best."

As for the books of the later Hanafees, such as *al-Khulaasah* of al-Kaidanee, they quote that amongst those things which are prohibited in Prayer is making a sign with your forefinger, like Ahlul-Hadeeth! In the book of Prayer of al-Mas'oodee, he states that pointing with the forefinger was a Sunnah with the older generations, then was practised by the Shee'ah and Raafidees and so the later scholars of Ahlus-Sunnah left it and so it became abrogated. Whereas we find in Fath ul-Qadeer of Ibn ul-Hammaam and he is one of the greatest Hanafee jurist, that the pointing is Sunnah and that he who says other than that, then he has gone against what is related, rather Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ash-Shaybaanee, the student of Abu Haneefah reported in his Muwatta that it is Sunnah. Is there not in these examples a clear proof that blind-following of madhhabs is a calamity that has taken the Muslims away from the following the way of the best of generations?!

⁴⁰ This excellent saying, overflowing with great wisdom, was said by the learned man of this Ummah 'Abdullaah ibn 'Abbaas (radi-Allaahu 'anhumaa) as quoted by Taqiyyuddeen as-Subkee in his Fataawaa (1/148) - being amazed by its beauty. It was taken from Ibn 'Abbaas by Mujaahid, as occurs in *Jaami Bayaan ul-'ilm wa Fadlihee* (1/91) and *al-Ihkaam fee Usool il-Ahkaam* (1 /145). Maalik took it from Mujaahid and it is ascribed to Maalik and became well known from him. It was taken from them by Imaam Ahmad - rahimahullaah. Abu Daawood says in *Masaa'il ul-Imaam Ahmad* (p. 276):

"I heard Ahmad say: There is no one except that his opinion may be taken or left, except for the Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam)."

“It is not permissible for any one to give judgment with our saying unless they know the source from which we took it.”⁴¹

“If the Hadeeth is authentic then it is my madhhab.”⁴²

“If I say something then compare it to the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger and if it agrees to them, then accept it and that which of goes against them, then reject it and throw my saying against the wall.”⁴³

These are the saying of those prominent Imaams, may Allaah enter them into the Home of Peace. Unfortunately, the later blind-followers and authors who wrote the books, whom the people think to be scholars and infallible mujtahids, have made it obligatory for the people to blindly-follow one of the four Imaams and their well-known madhhabs. After declaring this to be obligatory, they forbade taking or acting upon anyone else’s saying, it is as if they have made him (i.e. the Imaam) a Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) to be obeyed. It would have been better had they acted upon the sayings of the Imaams. However, most of them know nothing of the Imaam whom they claim to follow, except his name. Further, some of the later followers invented questions, created new madhhabs and ascribed them to the original Imaams. So those who came after them think that it is the saying of the Imaam or his students and in reality it goes against what the Imaam said and approved. The Imaam is free from what they ascribe to him, such as the saying of many of the later Hanafees that it is forbidden to point with the forefinger in the tashahhud in Prayers, that what is meant by Allaah’s Hand is His Power, or that He is present by His Dhaat (self) in every place and not above the ‘Arsh, because of this and its like the unity of the Muslims has been destroyed, their community has separated and the splits increased.

The Messenger of Allaah (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) said,

“My Ummah will split into seventy-three sects, all of them in the fire except one.” It was said, “Who are they O Messenger of Allaah?” He said, *“That which I and my Companions are upon.”*⁴⁴

⁴¹ From the sayings of Imaam Abu Haneefah an-Nu’mān - rahimahullaah - and it is established from him by a number of narrations. (See *al-Intiqaa* of Ibn ‘Abd ul-Barr (p.145) and *A’laam ul-Muwaqqi’een* of Ibn ul-Qayyim (2/309)

⁴² The two Imaams Abu Haneefah and ash-Shaafi’ee - rahimahumullaah - stated that. See *Rasm ul-Muftee* from the collected *Rasaa’il* of Ibn ‘Aabideen (1/4), *Eeqaz ul-Hamam* of al-Fulaanee (p.62 and 107) and *al-Haashiya* of Ibn Aabideen (vol.1, p.63). Imaam ash-Shaafi’ee - rahimahullaah - said to Imaam Ahmad - rahimahullaah:

“You know better about Hadeeth than us, so if an authentic Hadeeth comes to you, then inform me of it, that I may say according to it, whether its source is the Hijaz or Koofaa or Egypt.” [See *al-Intiqaa* of Ibn ‘Abd ul-Barr, p.75]

⁴³ This is a saying of ash-Shaafi’ee - rahimahullaah. See *al-Majmoo’* of an-Nawawee (1/63) and *A’laam ul-Muwaqqi’een* of Ibn ul-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (2/361)

⁴⁴ Reported by Abu Daawood (2/503-504), Ibn Maajah (2/1322) ad-Daarimee (2/241), Ahmad and al-Haakim (1/128), who declared it Saheeh and adh-Dhahabee agreed.

4. BLIND-FOLLOWING OF A PARTICULAR PERSON MADE BINDING BY LATER FOLLOWERS

By Allaah, the Sublime, verily the Muslims when they were complete Muslims and true in their Islaam were certainly aided and given victory over the lands. They raised up the banner of the Deen, like the rightly-guided Khulafah and those who followed them in righteousness - radi-Allaahu ‘anhum. However when the Muslims changed the commands of the Rabb of the worlds, Allaah, the Most High, rewarded them by removing His blessings from them and removed the Khilaafah from them, as is witnessed to by many aayaat.

“That is so because Allaah will never change a grace which He has bestowed on a people until they change what is in their ownelves. Verily, Allaah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.” [Sooratul-Anfaal (8): 53]

From that which they have changed, is the taking of particular madhhabs and blindly clinging to them even when wrong. These madhhabs are new innovations which came about after the first three generations; there is no doubt about this and every innovation⁴⁵, for which reward is expected and is thought to be part of the Deen, is misguidance.⁴⁶

The Pious Predecessors (the first three generations of Muslims) used to cling to the Book and Sunnah and that which they indicated to and that which the Ummah united upon and they were Muslims - and may Allaah be pleased with them and make us from them.

However, when the innovation of madhhabs sprang up, their word split and the people began to declare each other as misguided, to extent that, they gave Fatwa’s (rulings) that it was not possible for a Hanafee to pray behind a Shaafi’ee Imaam.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Innovations - Bidah (in Arabic) any invented act, or belief, which is made to compete or resemble the shareeah and is followed for the same reason that the sharee’ah is followed, that is for Allaah’s pleasure.

⁴⁶ See *al-I’tisaam* of ash-Shaatibee - rahimahullaah.

⁴⁷ The matter even reached the extent that some of them declared that it is not permissible for a Hanafee to marry a Shaafi’ee woman since she is a Kaafir due to their saying “I am a believer, if Allaah wills” as occurs in Shamsud-Deen Muhammad al-Qahshaa’ee’s explanation of *Mukhtasar al-Wiqayyah*, well-known as *Jaami’ ur-Rumooz*. Yet another well-known Hanafee scholar, Mufti uth-Thaqulain said that to marry a Shaafi’ee woman was permissible in analogy with the People of the Book. [Zain ad-Deen ibn Nujaym, quoted by the 16th century Egyptian Hanafee scholar in his eight volume work entitled *al-Bahr ar-Raa’iq*]

Even then according to this analogy a Shaafi’ee man is therefore not allowed to marry a Hanafee Woman, just as a male of the People of the Book is not allowed to marry a female Muslim!!

Even present day Hanafee scholars have shown similar kinds of bigot attitudes towards their opposing madhhabs. In *Fatawa Rahimiyah*, under the heading, ‘How should a Hanafee Imaam lead in prayer the Shaafi’ee followers?’, a question was asked to Mufti Abdul Raheem Lajpuri, an authority on Hanafee Fiqh and a prominent scholar from the school of Deoband.

Question: I belong to the Hanafee madhhab and teach in a school belonging to the Shaafi’ee madhhab. Sometimes I lead the loud-toned prayer; so will there be any faults if, after the Soorah al-Faatihah in deference to my Shaafi’ee followers in prayer, I pause so much that in that time they may quickly recite the Soorah al-Faatihah and then begin the other Soorah.

If you say that the followers of the four madhhabs are the Ahlus-Sunnah - then their actions give the lie to them and contradict and refute their saying. Thus due to this innovation the four Prayer stations in the Masjid ul-Haraam came about and there came to be four Jamaa'ahs and the follower of each madhhab would wait for the Jamaa'ah of his madhhab. So due to innovations like this Iblees was able to attain one of his goals; that is the splitting of the Muslims and destruction of their unity, so we seek Allaah's refuge from that.

Answer: Such delay (in joining the Soorah to the Soorah al-Faatihah) for a Hanafee Imaam is not proper; it is forbidden. Such prayer will be defective and will have to be said afresh; prostration for lapse will also not be sufficient, for in the case in question delay has been caused deliberately.

This book of Fataawa has the approval of the major Deobandee Hanafee scholars of India, like Moulana Muhammad Zakhariyyah and Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi.

5. WILL IT BE ASKED IN THE GRAVE ABOUT WHICH MADHHAB ONE FOLLOWED?

I ask you, by Allaah, the Great, O Thinking and just Muslims that when a Muslim dies, will he be asked in his grave or on the Day of Requital, why did you not follow the madhhab of so and so? Or why did you not follow the tareeqah (order) of such and such?

By Allaah, you will not be asked about that at all, rather you will certainly be asked about that which Allaah made obligatory upon you as regards belief in Him and in accepting the message with which His Messenger was sent with.

So, O Muslim, return to your Deen, which is acting upon what is manifest of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah and that upon which the Pious Predecessors and righteous Imaams agreed, for verily therein lies your salvation and by that is your success. Sufficient for you is what al-Imaam at-Tirmidhee reports in his Sunan from al-'Irbaad ibn Saariyah who said:

The Messenger of Allaah (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) gave us an admonition one day after the Fajr Prayer, by which our eyes shed tears and our hearts were afraid. So a man said, "This is as if it is a farewell sermon, so counsel us, O Messenger of Allaah?" He said, *"I counsel you to fear Allaah and to hear and obey even if an Ethiopian slave becomes your leader, since he who lives will see great controversy. So keep to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the Rightly-Guided Khulafaa, cling to that with your teeth. Beware of novelties for every novelty is an innovation and every innovation is a going astray."*⁴⁸

Since the matter is like this, then we must beware of blind-following, since there is no doubt that he who blindly follows a particular madhhab in every matter, he will be leaving off acting on many authentic Hadeeth and going against them. There is no doubt that this is nothing but misguidance. Therefore many of the verifiers within the Hanafees have clearly stated that it is not binding to follow a particular madhhab, as occurs in *at-Tahreer* of al-Kamaal ibn al-Hammaam and *Radd ul-Mukhtaar* of Ibn 'Aabideen ash-Shaamee.

⁴⁸ Saheeh: reported by al-Tirmidhee (5/44), Ibn Maajah (1/15-17), Abu Daawood (4607), Ahmad and al-Haakim (1/95-96) who said, "Saheeh. It has no weakness" and adh-Dhahabee. Shaykh al-Albaanee declared it Saheeh in *Zilzaal ul-Jamah* (1/17)

6. THE SAYING THAT IT IS OBLIGATORY TO FOLLOW A PARTICULAR MADHHAB, IS BASED UPON MATTERS OF POLITICS

The saying that it is obligatory to follow a particular madhhab was based upon political circumstance, ‘changing times’ and human desires (and this fact is not hidden from the intelligent one who knows about history), as we shall soon make clear and verily that which is obligatory is to know the truth and to act upon it.

Know that the correct madhhab, which it is obligatory to attach oneself to and follow is the madhhab of the most noble, Muhammad (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) only and he is the ‘greatest Imaam’ (Imaam ul-A’zam) whom it is obligatory to follow.

As Allaah says,

“Take whatever the Messenger gives you and leave that which he forbids you.” [Soorah al-Hashr (59): 7]

The Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) said,

“Keep to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the Rightly-Guided Khulafaa.”

Neither, Imaam Abu Haneefah or Maalik said, ‘Keep to my saying’ or ‘Follow my madhhab’, not even Abu Bakr or ‘Umar; rather they all forbade that.

So since that was the original state of affairs, then from where have you come with these madhhabs!?

Why have they appeared and come to be obligatory upon the Muslims!?

Consider and think; they did not appear except after the best three generations and were not made binding except by tyrannical rulers, ignorant judges and misguided people who claimed knowledge.

This issue is to be discussed in details in the chapters to follow.

7. AD-DEHLAWEE'S VERIFICATION THAT MADHHABS ARE AN INNOVATION

Shah Waleeyullaah ad-Dehlawee⁴⁹ - rahimahullaah - mentioned this saying of his in his valuable book *Hujjatullah ul-Baalighah* (1/153) and reported the saying of Ibn Hazm - rahimahullaah - (1/154-155):

“Blind-following is Haraam and it is not permissible to take the saying of anyone without a proof except for Allaah’s Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam), since Allaah, the Most High says:

“Follow what has been sent down unto you from your Lord and follow not any Awliyaa (protectors and helpers), beside Him. Little do you remember!” [Sooratul-A’raaf (7): 3]

“When it is said to them: ‘Follow what Allaah has sent down.’ They say: ‘No! We shall follow what we found our fathers following.’” [Sooratul-Baqarah (2):170]

Allaah says, praising those who do not blindly follow,

“My slaves, those who listen to the word and follow the best thereof, those are (the ones) whom Allaah has guided and those are men of understanding.” [Sooratuz-Zumar (39):17-18]

Allaah the Most High also says,

“If you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allaah and His Messenger, if you believe in Allaah and in the Last Day.”

So Allaah, the Most High, did not permit referring differences back to anything but the Qur’aan, the Sunnah and ijmaa’ of the Companions... It is established that it is prohibited for anyone to take everything that a single man from the Sahaabah (Companions) or from the best two generations that followed them. Then he who takes everything from Abu Haneefah or Maalik or ash-Shaafi’ee or Ahmad, not leaving anything from their saying and not relying upon what is in the Qur’aan and the Sunnah, then let him know that he has certainly opposed the ijmaa’ of the whole Ummah⁵⁰... Furthermore, all the scholars forbade being blindly followed and so a muqallid only disobeys his Imaam.”

⁴⁹ Ahmad ibn ‘Abdur-Raheem better known as Shah Waleeyullaah Dehlawee (1703-1762 CE) was a noteworthy reformer, born in the Indian sub-continent at a time when Taqleed was, perhaps, most rampant. After he had mastered the various Islaamic sciences, he called for the re-opening of the door of Ijtihaad and the re-unification of the schools of Fiqh. In his efforts to re-examine Islaamic principles and to find out on what authority the legal schools based their regulations, Shah Waleeyullaah rejuvenated the study of Hadeeth. Although he did not go so far as to reject the existing Fiqh schools, nevertheless he taught that everyone was free to choose a particular decision different from that taken by the school to which he belonged himself, if he was convinced that the case was better confirmed by Hadeeth.

⁵⁰ Such a person has given his Imaam a higher status than that of the Sahaabah, for Aboo Bakr and Umar (radi-Allaahu ‘anhumaa) were more worthy of being blindly-followed for their close

How surprising are the blind-followers of these innovated and widespread madhhabs, since one of them follows whatever is attributed to his madhhab, even though it is far from the proof. He treats it as if it were a Prophet sent down and this is far from what is true and correct. We have seen and found by experience that these blind-followers think that their Imaam cannot make a mistake and what he says is all totally correct. He harbours in his heart that he will never leave his blind-following even if the proof appears in contradiction to it. This is just the same as what at-Tirmidhee and others report from ‘Adee ibn Haatim that he said,

“I heard Allaah’s Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) recite:

“They (Jews and Christians) took their rabbis and their monks to be their Lords besides Allaah.” [Sooratut-Tawbah (9): 31]

So, I said: “O Messenger of Allaah, they did not worship them”. So he (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) said, *“Verily if they (the rabbis) made something permissible for them (that which Allaah had made Haraam), then they made it permissible and if they made something forbidden to them, then they made it forbidden - that is their worship of them.”*⁵¹

companionship to the Messenger of Allaah, their Knowledge and understanding of the religion and their high status with Allaah.

⁵¹ Reported by at-Tirmidhee (5/278)

**8. HE WHO BLINDLY FOLLOWS ANYONE APART FROM
ALLAAH'S MESSENGER (SAL-ALLAAHU 'ALAYHE WA SALLAM)
IS ASTRAY AND IGNORANT!!**

O Muslims, if we blindly follow the madhhab of a man and then a Hadeeth reaches us from the infallible Messenger (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) whose obedience Allaah has made obligatory upon us and we then leave the Hadeeth of the Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) and follow that man and his madhhab, then who can be more unjust than us and what will be our excuse when the people stand before the Lord of the Worlds?!

So he who believes that it is obligatory upon the people to follow a particular person from these Imaams, then he has given him the status of the Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) and that is Kufr. The most that can be said is that, it is permitted or obligatory for the common person to follow any Imaam without specifying anyone in particular. However, he who loves the Imaams and follows them all, taking the saying of any of them which appears to be in conformity to the Sunnah, then that is the best. But he who clings blindly to one of them, leaving aside the rest, then his action is like the one who clings blindly to a single Companion and leaves the rest, like the Raafidees, Naasibeas and the Khaarijee and this is the way of the people of innovation and the followers of desires; those who are rebuked and have gone away from the truth, as is established by the Book, the Sunnah and the ijmaa'.

Shaykh ul-Islam Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah - rahimahullaah - says in his *Fataawaa al-Misriyyah*:

“If a man is following Abu Haneefah, or Maalik, or ash-Shaafi'ee or Ahmad - rahimahumullaah - and he sees that in some questions that another madhhab is stronger and so he follows that then he has done something good. That does not cause any harm to his Deen or his integrity, without any disagreement. Rather this is more correct and beloved to Allaah and his Messenger, than he who blindly follows anyone other than the Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam), such as the one who blindly follows Abu Haneefah and thinks that the saying of this one in particular is the truth that has to be followed, in exclusion of that Imaam who contradicts him. So, he who does that is ignorant, rather he may be a Kaafir and we seek Allaah's refuge from that.”

In the Book of judgements from *Al-Insaaf*, Shaykh ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said,

“He who makes it obligatory to blindly follow a particular Imaam, then his repentance is sought and if he does not repent then he is killed, since this is associating partners with Allaah in setting down Sharee'ah, which is one of the unique rights of the Lord.”

9. IBN UL-HAMMAAM'S VERIFICATION THAT STICKING TO A PARTICULAR MADH HAB IS NOT OBLIGATORY

Al-Kamaal ibn ul-Hammaam, one of the foremost Hanafee scholars and an author of various large works of Hanafee Fiqh, mentions in *at-Tahreer*, a book about the basics of the fiqh of the Hanafees that,

“Sticking to a particular madhhab is not obligatory in the correct view, since it has not been imposed as a duty, as nothing is obligatory except that which Allaah and His Messenger have obligated; neither Allaah nor His Messenger have made it obligatory for anyone to follow the madhhab of any man of the scholars, so that he follows him in his Deen in everything and leaves what comes from other than him. The best generations passed by without saying that it is binding to follow a particular madhhab, whereas most of the blind-followers say, ‘I am a Hanafee’, ‘I am a Shaafi’ee’, whereas he knows nothing about the way of his Imaam, he does not become his follower just by saying that, in the same way as if he said, ‘I am a scholar ‘ or ‘I am a writer’, he does not become that just by saying it, while he is far away from the way of his Imaam. So how is it correct for him to claim allegiance (to a madhhab) due only to his abstract claims and meaningless saying?! So consider.”

Al-Fulaanee says in *Eeqaz Hamam Oolul-Absaar* (p.41), while explaining the difference between a blind follower (muqallid) and a follower of evidence (muttabi’):

“The blind-follower does not ask for the judgement of Allaah and His Messenger, but rather he asks about the position of his Imaam and if it appears to him that the madhhab of his Imaam is contrary to the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, then still he will not leave that. However, the follower of the evidence (muttabi’) asks about the judgement of Allaah and His Messenger and does not ask about someone else’s opinion and madhhab.”

Taqleed in the Sharee’ah is referring back to someone’s saying for which there is no proof and that is prohibited in the Sharee’ah. Ittibaa is that for which the proof is established. Taqleed in Allaah’s Deen is not correct and Ittibaa’ is binding.

If it is appropriate for the common person to accept the saying of the mufti, even though it may be an error from the mufti, then how can it not be fitting for him to accept a Hadeeth of the Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam)?! If it is not permissible to an act on a Sunnah of Allaah’s Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam), after it has been established, unless so and so act on it, then their saying would be a pre-condition for acting upon the Sunnah. That is one of the most futile of all baseless things.

Thus when Imaam Abu Haneefah used to pass judgement, he would say,

“This is the conclusion that we have been able to come to, according to our knowledge, so he who finds something clearer than that, then that is more fitting.”⁵²

⁵² Related by ash-Sha’raanee in *Tanbeeh ul-Mughtarreen*.

10. THE IMAAM WHO IS FOLLOWED AND OBEYED IS THE PROPHET (SAL-ALLAAHU ‘ALAYHE WA SALLAM)

Imaam ash-Shaafi’ee - rahimahullaah - says,

“The Muslims are united that when the Sunnah of Allaah’s Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) appears to a person, then it is not permissible for him to leave that for the saying of anyone.”⁵³

This is what the Messenger of Allaah was ordered to proclaim:

“Say (O Muhammad sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam): ‘If you love Allaah then follow me.’” [Soorah Aal-’Imraan (3): 31]

⁵³ See *A’laam ul-Muwaqqi’een* of Ibn ul-Qayyim (1/7).

11. FOLLOWING OF THE MADHHABS HAS RESULTED IN DISUNITY AND DISAGREEMENTS

How is it fitting for a Muslim to want to reject that which is established from Allaah's Messenger (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam), who does not speak from his own desire, but conveys that which is revelation?!

When it befell the people that they accepted some and left some, then their disuniting came about and they began to say, 'With us it is...and with you...' and 'Our books ... and your books' and 'Our madhhab...and your madhhab' and 'Our Imaam...and your Imaam...'

That gave birth to mutual hatred, distrust, mutual envy and arrogance, until the Muslims became unsuccessful and their united body fragmented, so that they became food for the Europeans and the tyrants. Is not every one of the Imaams of the Muslims of Ahlus-Sunnah our Imaam? - May Allaah raise us up amongst them.

If you look into the matter carefully it will be clear to you that these madhhabs were spread, promoted and made attractive by the enemies of Islaam in order to split the Muslims and cause discord amongst them. Or they were started by the ignorant in conformity with the Jews and Christians and in imitation of them, as they do in many matters.

Ibn 'Abd ul-Barr and Ibn Taymiyyah⁵⁴ - rahimahumullaah - both said,

"There is no (room for) anyone's saying along with the saying of Allaah's Messenger (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) if it is established from him. The Sunnah of Allaah's Messenger (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) has more right to be taken and acted upon; that is the case for every Muslim, not as the sect of blind-following do, in their giving preference to opinion and the madhhab over and above the text. The text of the Book and the Sunnah is not to be opposed by possibilities of the mind, fantasies of the soul or satanic sectarianism; so that it is said, 'Perhaps the mujtahid saw this text and left it for a reason that appeared to him', or that 'maybe he found a different proof' and their like, which the sects of blind-followers are very fond of. Such a one is encircled by the ignorance of the blind-followers, so take note."

⁵⁴ Ahmad ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328 CE) was foremost among the reformers of his period. Because of his challenge of the status quo, many of his contemporaries severely opposed him and had the authorities jail him repeatedly. Ibn Taymiyyah was, however, one of the greatest scholars of his time. Initially, he had studied Fiqh according to the Hanbalee Madhhab, but did not restrict himself to it. He studied the sources of Islamic law in depth and mastered all the Islamic sciences which were known at that time. Furthermore, he examined the writings of various sects which had broken off from Islaam, studied the religious books of the Christians, the Jews and their various sects and wrote extensive critiques on all of them. Ibn Taymiyyah also took part in the Jihaad against the Mongols who had occupied the Eastern and Northern provinces of the former 'Abbaasid state and were at that time threatening Egypt and North Africa. Ibn Taymiyyah's students were among the greatest Islamic scholars of their time and carried on to the next generation the banner of Ijtihad and a return to the pure sources of Islaam which he had raised. Among them was Ibnul-Qayyim, a great scholar in the fields of Fiqh and Hadeeth, adh-Dhahabee, a master in the science of Hadeeth criticism and Ibn Katheer, a master in Tafseer, History and Hadeeth.

Imaam ‘Abdur-Rahmaan al-Awzaa’ee - rahimahullaah - said,

“Stick to the narrations from the Pious Predecessors even if the people renounce you and beware of the opinions of men even if they make them seem alluring.”

Bilal ibn ‘Abdullaah ibn ‘Umar reported that ‘Abdullaah ibn ‘Umar said: Allaah’s Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) said,

*“Do not prevent the women from their share in the mosques.”*⁵⁵

Bilal ibn ‘Abdullaah however said,

‘As for me I will prevent my wife and he who wishes let him allow his wife.’

So ‘Abdullaah ibn ‘Umar turned to him and said,

‘May Allaah curse you! May Allaah curse you! May Allaah curse you! You hear me say Allaah’s Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) ordered that they should not be prevented.’ Then he stood up angrily.”⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Saheeh: Reported by al-Bukhaaree (1/222,223), Muslim (2/32), Ahmad (2/7,92) and ad-Daarimee (1/293).

⁵⁶ Reported by al-Haakim in *Ma’rifat ‘Uloom il-Hadeeth* (p.182) and at-Tabaraanee. It is established and correct due to a number of reports, Muslim (4/162-164), al-Baihaaqee (3/132), at-Tirmidhee (2/459), Abu Daawood (568), ‘Abdur-Razzaaq (3/147) and Ahmad (5/194-196).

12. THE MADHHAB OF IMAAM ABU HANEEFAH IS ACTING UPON THE BOOK AND THE SUNNAH

The author of *al-Hidaayah fee Rawdatil-'Ulamaa iz-Zinduwaisiyyah* reports that it was said to Abu Haneefah - rahimahullaah:

‘What if you say something and the Book of Allaah contradicts it?’ He said, ‘Leave my saying for the Book of Allaah.’ So it was said, ‘What if what is narrated from Allaah’s Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) contradicts it? He said, ‘Leave my saying for what is narrated by Allaah’s Messenger.’ So it was said, ‘What if the saying of a Companion contradicts it?’ He said, ‘Leave my saying for the saying of the Companions - radi-Allaahu ‘anhum.’⁵⁷

In *Kitaab ul-Imtaa’* it is mentioned that, al-Baihaaqee reports in his Sunan that ash-Shaafi’ee - rahimahullaah - said,

“If I say something and there is also something from Allaah’s Messenger which goes against it, then that which is authentic from the Hadeeth of Allaah’s Messenger has precedence, so do not blindly follow me.”

Imaam ul-Haramain also reports this from ash-Shaafi’ee and there is no difference about this.

Ibn ul-Qayyim says in *A’laam ul-Muwaqqi’een* (1/77),

“The companions of Abu Haneefah are united that the weak Hadeeth takes preference to analogy and opinion and his madhhab is built upon that.”

So he who says that it is not obligatory for him to act upon the Hadeeth or that it is not permissible, then we do not see him except as a person who wishes to reject Allaah’s proof with mere delusion and suspicion, and this is not the way of a Muslim. He who uses the excuse that he cannot understand, then that is not acceptable since Allaah, the Most High, sent down His Book to be acted upon and its meaning understood and ordered His Messenger to explain it to the people in general. As Allaah says,

“And We have sent down unto you the reminder and the advice (Qur’aan), that you (O Muhammad sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam)

⁵⁷ Al-Fulaanee, *Eeqaadh al-Himam*, p.50. Al-Fulaanee also mentioned in his book, *Eeqaadh al-Himam* that ibn Daqeeq al-Eid collected all writings that were opposed to the Authentic Hadeeth by each of the four Madhhabs, along with those writing that were opposed by more than one Madhhab at a time and collected all this information in a large volume. In the beginning of his book, ibn Daqeeq al-Eid said,

“And relating these Fataawas in these matters to the Mujtahid Imaams is Haraam (impermissible, since they all said that the Hadeeth is their Madhhab and if their sayings are in disagreement with the Hadeeth, one must follow the Hadeeth). Those who follow Taqleed and these Madhhabs must know that these Fataawas, so as not to attribute them to the Imaams and thus relate falsehood to them.” [Quoted by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *The Hadeeth is Proof Itself*]

may clearly explain to men what is sent down to them.” [Soorah an-Nahl (16): 44]

So how can it be said that his speech which is the explanation to the people cannot be understood except by a single person among them?! Rather, in this time, it is not understood by anyone, based upon their claim that there has not been a mujtahid in the world for hundreds of years!!

Perhaps the like of these words came from those who did not want the true state of their opinion should appear to the people in general. That (their position is) in fact in opposition to the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam). So they reach their goal by declaring that understanding the Book and the Sunnah (upon which deriving judgements depends) is only possible for a mujtahid, then they deny that there are any mujtahids in the world and then this saying is spread amongst the people. Allaah knows the true state of affairs.

Some of them added to this, that it is not permissible to change from one madhhab to another, nor to take what seems to be more correct from each of the madhhabs in order that the people could not find a way to that which is preferable, not even aspire to that!

While the Qur’aan commands every Muslim to act upon that which is established from the Hadeeth of the Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) and warns those who disobey him (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam), as Allaah the Most High says:

“Let those, beware, who oppose the Messenger’s order! In case some fitnah (trial) should befall them or a painful torment be inflicted upon them.” [Soorah an-Noor (24):63]

Every Muslim must accept the Hadeeth and must not be prevented by being upon the madhhab of so and so, as Allaah, the Most High, says,

“If you differ in anything amongst yourselves refer it to Allaah and His Messenger.” [Soorah an-Nisaa (4):59]

Part of referring back to him (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) is the acceptance of his saying when there is disagreement; and disagreement has already occurred between the Imaams and so it is obligatory to judge the differences in the light of his sayings (the Hadeeth).

13. THE MUJTAHID MAY BE CORRECT OR INCORRECT BUT THE PROPHET (SAL-ALLAAHU ‘ALAYHE WA SALLAM) IS INFALLIBLE

It is very strange that they (the blind-followers) know that the mujtahid is sometimes right and sometimes wrong; that is part of what they believe, however, the Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) is infallible. Even then, they stick blindly to the saying of the mujtahid as you see and they leave the saying of the Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam).

They should rather have remained firm upon what the mujtahid himself said, instead of clinging to what is falsely attributed to them. For example the dependence of Hanafees of Mesopotamia (Iraq), upon what is written in *Khulaasatul Kaidanee* as regards the forbidding of pointing with the forefinger in tashahhud,⁵⁸ even though it is an established Sunnah of Allaah’s Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) and all of the Companions and the mujtahid Imaams in general and of Imaam Abu Haneefah, Abu Yoosuf and of Muhammad - rahimahumullaah, as is stated in the *Muwatta* of Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ash-Shaibanee, *Sharh Ma’aanee ul-Aathaar* of at-Tahaawee, *Fath ul-Qadeer*, *al-’Inaayah*, *’Umdatul-Qaaree* and other recognised books of fiqh of the Hanafee madhhab, so take note.

We have seen people of obedience and worship, yet they are lax about acting upon Hadeeth and do not give it importance. Rather they are more concerned with what is written in the books of their madhhab and think as if the Hadeeth were a rejected matter and this, in reality, is the beginning of ignorance.

Ash-Shaykh Muhammad Hayaat as-Sindee said,

“It is binding on every Muslim to strive to understand the meanings of the Qur’aan and Hadeeth and follow them and take rulings from them. And if he is not able, then he should follow the scholars and not stick to a madhhab in particular, since that is like taking it as a Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam). As for that which the people of our time have invented as regards sticking to a particular madhhab and not permitting moving from one madhhab to another, then that is ignorance, innovation and deviation. We have seen them leaving aside authentic unabrogated Hadeeth and clinging to their madhhabs without any support.”

Imaam ash-Shaafi’ee said,

“He who blindly follows anyone in making something forbidden or making it permissible, while there is an authentic Hadeeth opposing that and his blind-following prevents him from acting upon the Sunnah, then he has taken the one whom he blindly-follows as a Lord besides Allaah, the Most High, by making lawful what Allaah has made forbidden. Verily we are for Allaah and will certainly return to Him.”

⁵⁸ Details have already proceeded.

One of the most astonishing things is that when those who advocate Taqleed, find something from some of the Companions - radi-Allaahu ‘anhum, which goes against an authentic narration, not finding any explanation, then they say that it is possible that the Hadeeth did not reach him; they do not find anything wrong with that and that is indeed correct.⁵⁹

But when they find a Hadeeth which contradicts the saying of the one whom they are blindly-following, they strive to explain it away by any means, even twisting the words from their meanings. If it is said to them, when there is no explanation possible, perhaps the narration did not reach the person whom you are following, they cause havoc and go beyond bounds in condemning him and they cannot take it. Look at these fools who allow that a Hadeeth did not reach a Companion - radi-Allaahu ‘anhum - but do not admit that, that can happen for the leaders of the madhhabs, even though the difference between the two is like the distance between the heavens and the earth. You see them reading the books of Hadeeth and studying them, not to act upon them but to abandon them. If they find a Hadeeth contradicting their madhhab they go to extremes in explaining it away. If they find themselves unable, they say,

“Those whom we are following know more about Hadeeth than us.”

⁵⁹ There are many examples of this, and therefore the Sahabah were very careful whilst giving an opinion about anything. When Ibn Mas’ood was questioned about the inheritance rights of a woman who had been married without a defined Mahr (dowry), he said,

“I am giving my opinion about her. If it is correct, then it is from Allaah, but if it is incorrect, then it is from me and Satan.” [Collected in *Sunan at-Tirmidhee*, *Sunan an-Nasaa’ee* and *Sunan Abu Daawood* (English Trans.). vol. 2. p.567, no.2111) and authenticated by al-Albaanee in *Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood*, vol.2, p.397-8, no.1858.]

Also Sa’eed reported that ‘Umar used to say that the Deyah (compensation for accidental murder) is given to male paternal relatives of the husband and the woman does not inherit anything from the Deyah of her husband, until ad-Dahhaak ibn Sufyaan said to him, “Allaah’s Messenger wrote to me to give Ashyam ad-Dibaabee’s wife from her husband’s Deyah.” So ‘Umar withdrew his opinion. [Collected in *Sunan Abu Dawood* (English trans. vol.2, p.826, no.2921) and authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Saheeh Sunan Abu Dawood* no.2540.]

No one in the Muslim nation understood the Deen more than the Sahaabah, and therefore they never made it obligatory for anyone to follow their opinion, rather they abandoned their opinion as soon as a Hadeeth was made known to them. The pious Imaams followed this attitude after the Sahabah, like Imaam Maalik, and it was only the later generations who split the Ummah of Muhammad into madhabs!

Ibn Wahb one of the main students of Imaam Maalik - rahimahullah said,

“I once heard someone ask Maalik about washing between the toes during Wudoo, to which he replied, ‘People do not have to do it’. I waited until most of the people left the study circle and informed him that there is a Hadeeth concerning it. He asked what it was, so I said, that al-Layth ibn Said, Ibn Luhay’ah and ‘Amr ibn Al-Haarith all related from al-Mustawrid ibn Shidaad al-Qurashee that he saw Allaah’s Messenger rub between his toes with his little finger, Maalik said, ‘Surely that is a good Hadeeth which I have never heard before.’ Later when I heard people ask Maalik about washing between the toes, he used to insist that it must be washed.” [Ibn Abee Haatim, *al-Jarh wat-Ta’deel*, (Hyderabad, India: Majlis Daa’irah al-Ma’aarif al-Uthmaaneeyah, 1952), foreword pp. 31-33]

Do they not realise that they are establishing the proof of Allaah against themselves by that? If they find a Hadeeth, which agrees with their madhhab they are delighted, if they find one that goes against their madhhab they close their minds and will not listen. Allaah, the Most High, says:

“But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith, until they make you judge in all disputes between them and find in themselves no resistance against your decision and accept (them) with full submission.” [Soorah an-Nisaa (4):65]

As-Sanad ibn ‘Inaan - rahimahullaah - said in his explanation of the *Mudawwanah* of Imaam Maalik - rahimahullaah:

“We know that no intelligent person can be pleased with mere blind-following; rather that is the way of the ignorant and dull-witted or obstinate fools. We do not say that it is forbidden for everyone, rather we what we declare to be obligatory is knowledge of the proof and the peoples’ sayings and the ignorant have to follow the people of knowledge. Blind-following is accepting someone’s saying and relying upon it without any proof or evidence. This never amounts to knowledge. Following the madhhab of a particular person is in itself a novel innovation, since we know for certain that the Companions - radi-Allaahu ‘anhum, did not do that, but rather they referred back to the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger and to that which seemed correct to them when they could not find the text. Those who came after them did the same; if they did not find a text they performed ijtihaad. Then came the third generation which included Imaams Abu Haneefah, Maalik, then ash-Shaafi’ee and Ahmad - rahimahullaahu ta’aalaa, who were upon the way of those before them. There was not in their time a particular madhhab which they studied and their followers were upon the same. How many sayings of Maalik and his companions did his followers oppose? What is very strange is that the people of blind-following claim that theirs is the old way, but rather it was invented more than two-hundred years after the Hijrah and after the passage of the generations whom the Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) praised.”

The blind-followers take (the positions of their Imaams) to be their Deen and madhhab, to the extent if you establish a thousand proofs from the texts against them, they would not pay any heed to them. Rather they flee from them like donkeys fleeing from a lion, like most of the people of Bukhaara and their like from the people of India and Turkey living around the two haraams, who hang tasbeehs around their necks and wear turbans like domes and constantly read books such as *dalaa’il ul-khairaat*, *khatm khawaaajah* and even *qaseedatul-bardah*⁶⁰ and their like, thinking that they get reward for that, but they will not point when making tashahhud.⁶¹ I have more than once told them that it is an established Sunnah from Allaah’s Messenger, his Noble Companions - radi-Allaahu ‘anhum - and the mujtahid Imaams -

⁶⁰ Books full of innovation and shirk.

⁶¹ These are most probably the experiences of Shaykh Sultan al-Ma’soomee while he used to teach in the Masjid ul-Haraam during the time of Hajj.

rahimahumullahu ta'aala - and it is harder upon Shaytaan than being struck with a bar of iron.⁶²

They reply by saying, 'We are Hanafees and in our madhhab it is not allowed, rather it is haraam.' So I showed them what is in the *Muwatta* of Imaam Muhammad and *Sharh Ma'aamee ul-Aathaar* of at-Tahaawee and *Fath ul-Qadeer* of Ibn ul-Hammaam. They reply that, that was the saying of their earlier scholars but the later scholars prevented it and left it, so it became abrogated, as is mentioned in al-Mas'oodee's *Kitaab us-Saalat* and *al-Khulaasah* of al-Kaidaaniyyah and they persisted in the fact that it is abandoned.

⁶² The author here refers to the saying of the Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam):

"It is certainly harder upon Shayhaan than iron." (Meaning the forefinger) [Reported by Ahmad and al-Bazzaar as occurs in *Majma' uz-Zawaa'id* (2/140). It is declared to be hasan by our Shaykh, al-Albaanee, in his valuable book *Sifat Salaah an- Nabee* p.171.]

14. THE TRUTH IS NOT CONFINED WITHIN THE OPINION OF ANYONE EXCEPT ALLAAH'S MESSENGER (SAL-ALLAAHU 'ALAYHE WA SALLAM)

The truth is not contained within the opinion of anyone, except with the one who came with the revelation, the most noble of us, Muhammad. The truth is confined to that which he brought, so if the fair person ponders upon this fact, it will become clear to him that blindly-following the madhhab of a particular Imaam without looking for a proof is ignorance and a huge misfortune. Indeed it is mere following of desire and sectarianism.

Ar-Rabee' ibn Sulaymaan al-Jeezee said:

I heard ash-Shaafi'ee having been asked about a problem by a man, so he said, "It is reported from the Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) that he said so and so." So the questioner said to him, "O Abu 'Abdullaah, Do you (also) say that?" So ash-Shaafi'ee - rahimahullaahu ta'aalaa - shook with rage and his complexion changed and said, "Woe to you! What earth would hold me? What heaven would shelter me, if I report something from Allaah's Messenger and then do not say in accordance with it?! Yes, upon the head and eyes." He kept repeating that saying.

In the narration of al-Humaidee, ash-Shaafi'ee is reported as having said,

"Have you seen a sash around my middle? Have you seen me coming out of a church?! That I should say, the Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) says...and then for you to say, 'Do you (also) say according to that', (How can it be) that I should report from the Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) and not say accordingly?!"⁶³

Ash-Sha'raanee reports in al-Meezaan: Abu Daawood said,

"I said to Imaam Ahmad, should I follow al-Awzaa'ee or Maalik?" He said, "Do not blindly follow anyone of them in your Deen. That which comes from Allaah's Messenger and his Companions - radi-Allaahu 'anhum - then take it, as for the Taabi'een after them then you may choose there from."

And Imaam Ahmad said,

"Do not blindly follow me, Maalik, Abu Haneefah, ash-Shaafi'ee, al-Awzaa'ee or ath-Thawree - but take from where they took. From the paucity of a person's fiqh (understanding) is that he blindly follows a man in his Deen."

⁶³ The narration of ar-Rabee' is reported by Abu Nu'aim in al-Hulyah (9/106) and al-Baihaaqee reports it with similar wording in *Manaaqib ash-Shaafi'ee* (1/475) and al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee in *al-Faqeeh wal-Mutafaqqih* (1/150) with Saheeh isnaad. As for the narration of al-Humaidee, it is reported by Abu Nu'aim in *al-Hulyah* (9/106) and in *Dhikr Akhbaar Isfahaan* (1/183) by various chains and al-Baihaaqee in *Manaaqib ash-Shaafi'ee* (1/474) with Saheeh isnaad.

Ibn al-Jawzee says in his book Talbees Iblees,

“In blind-following is a denial of the benefits of the intellect, since it was created to reflect and consider. It is unbecoming that he who is given a lighted candle should extinguish it and walk in the darkness.”

15. A VERY IMPORTANT NOTE

Know that the ijtihaad and opinion of the mujtahid are not the judgements of Allaah. If it was the judgement of Allaah, then it would not have been permissible for Abu Yoosuf, Muhammad and others to oppose the view of Imaam Abu Haneefah and his ijtihaad and therefore Imaam Abu Haneefah - rahimahullaah - said,

“This is my opinion, so he who comes with a better one, then I will accept it.”

And as was mentioned before Abu Yoosuf and Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ash-Shaibaanee differed with Imaam, Abu Haneefah in a third of the entire madhhab.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ *Haashiyah Ibn ‘Aabideen* (1/62). And this can be seen throughout the history of the Imaams and their students. For example:

Imaam Abu Haneefah had ruled that the Islaamic prohibition of Khamr covered only the product of fermented grape juice (the literal meaning of Khamr) and did not extend to intoxicants in general. According to this ruling intoxicating drinks made from other sources were allowable so long as the consumer did not become drunk. However, Abu Haneefah’s three main students (Abu Yoosuf, Muhammad ibn al-Hasan and Zufar) later rejected the ruling of their teacher, since they encountered reliable ahaadeeth of the Prophet (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam) clearly indicating that all intoxicants were to be included in the meaning of Khamr. [Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Rushd, *Bidaayah al-Mujtahid*, vol.1, p.405. See also as-Sayyid Saabiq’s *Fiqh as-Sunnah*, (Beirut: Daar al-Kitaab al-‘Arabee, 3rd. ed. 1977), vol.2, p. 378]

Imaam Abu Haneefah, Abu Yoosuf and Muhammad ash-Shaybaanee agree that the eating of spiny tailed lizard (ad-dabb) is unlawful. At-Tahaawee discusses this problem at full length and refutes the arguments of ash-Shaybaanee in his *Sharh Ma’ani al-Aathar*. [See at-Tahaawee, *Mukhtasar at-Tahaawee*, p.439 and *Sharh Ma’ani al-Aathar*, (Deoband, n.d., I) p.260-263]

Moulana Zachariya, the author of *Tableeghi Nisaab* (also known as *Fazaa’il A’maal*) says in the *Virtues of Ramadhan*,

“The well known opinion of Imaam Abu Haneefah is that Laylatul-Qadr moves throughout the year, while another view is that it moves throughout the month of Ramadhan. His famous students, Imaam Muhammad and Imaam Abu Yoosuf, however, were of the opinion that the night is fixed on one specific night which is unknown during the Holy Month.” [Fazaa’il A’maal, Vol.1 (The Virtues of Ramadhan) (English trans. Dini Book Depot: Delhi - April - 1985) p.60]

For a nafl (non-obligatory) I’tikaaf, the minimum time period should not be less than an entire day according to Imaam Abu Haneefah. According to Imam Muhammad there is no limit as to the minimum time period. Moulana Zachariyah supports the Fataawa (ruling) of Imaam Muhammad ash-Shaybaanee. [Fazaa’il A’maal, Vol.1 - The Virtues of Ramadhan - English trans. p.65]

Imaam Abu Haneefah stipulates that the I’tikaaf should be done in a masjid where the five daily prayers are said, where as according to Abu Yoosuf and Muhammad ash-Shaybaanee any masjid according to the Sharee’ah can be entered for I’tikaaf. [Fazaa’il A’maal, vol.1 - The Virtues of Ramadhan - p.67]

‘Isaam ibn Yoosuf al-Balakhee, who was a student of Imaam Muhammad ibn al-Hasan and a close follower of Abu Yoosuf, used to make a lot of rulings which differed from those of Abu Haneefah and his two companions, because the latter were not aware of certain evidence which later became available to him. [Ibn ‘Aabideen, *Rasm al-Muftee*, vol. 1, p. 27, quoted in *Sifah Salaah an-Nabee*, p.37] For example, he used to raise his hands before and after Rukoo’ (bowing in Salaah). [‘*Al-Fawaa’id al-Baahiyah fee Taraajim al-Hanafiyyah*, p.116, quoted in *Sifah Salaah an-Nabee*, foreword, p.39]

We ask everyone who blindly follows a particular person to the exclusion of others, 'What has given the one whom you follow more right to be followed than the others?' If he says, 'Because he was the most knowledgeable of his time and his excellence was greater than those before him.' Then we say, 'How do you know that, when you have declared that you are not one of the people of knowledge, rather this can only be known by someone who knows the different madhhabs and their proofs and that which is preferable there from? So, how can a blind man check the coinage? If it is that you do not follow except the most knowledgeable, then why not Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmaan, 'Alee and Ibn Mas'ood - radi-Allaahu 'anhum - since they are more knowledgeable than the one you are following by consensus of the Muslims?'

It is said to the blind-follower: 'Then what had the people used to do before the birth of the one, whom you blindly follow, to whose sayings you have given the status of revealed texts?' Woe to you! That you had stopped at that, but instead, you gave them precedence in following over the texts of the Sharee'ah. Were the people before the presence of those Imaams upon guidance or error?

They have to admit that they were upon guidance. So it is said to them: 'What were they upon except following the Qur'aan, the Sunnah and narrations and giving precedence to the saying of Allaah and His Messenger and the narrations from the Companions - radi-Allaahu 'anhum - in any disagreement and referring back to that and not to the sayings and the opinions of individuals! If that is the guidance, then what is there after the truth except misguidance?

It is not hidden how each party of the blind-followers have relegated all of the Companions, the Taabi'een and the scholars of the Ummah from their first to their last, except the one whom they follow, to the level that their sayings and their fataawa are ignored and they are not to be given any attention unless it is to refute them, if their saying goes against that of the Imaam whom they are blindly-following. It is to the extent that if the saying of the one they follow, contradicts a text from Allaah and His Messenger, then with them it is binding to explain the text away and twist it from

Imaam Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ash-Shaybaanee in his narration of Imaam Maalik's book, *al-Muwatta*, contradicted his teacher Imaam Abu Haneefah in about 20 different rulings. Imaam Muhammad said,

"Abe Haneefah did not feel that there was any ordained Salaah (prayer) for Istisqaa (Prayer for rain in times of drought), but in my opinion, the Imaam should lead the people in two units of Salaah, (for Istisqaa) make a Du'aa and reverse his cloak."
[Muhammad ibn al-Hasan, *at-Ta'leeq al-Mumajjid 'Alaa Muwatta' Muhammad*, p. 158, quoted in *Sifah Salaah an-Nabee*, p. 38.]

Imaam Abu Yoosuf agrees with Imaam Muhammad in this. (See Saheeh Muslim (English trans. vol. 1, no.1948) [Ref: al-Mughnee, vol.2, p.320. Also *al-Bidaayah al-Mujtahid wa Nihaayah al-Muqtasid*, vol.1, p.182 by Muhammad ibn Ahmed Ibn Rushd])

The sale of slave-mothers is valid according the Imaam Abu Haneefah and Abu Yoosuf, while Imaam Muhammad ash-Shaybaanee differs with them both. [as-Sarakhsi, op.cit., I, 319-20, Abdul-Aziz al-Bukhaaree, op. cit., III, 968 and al-Jassas, op. cit., fo.232]

And this list is endless. However just one example from above is enough to destroy all the arguments of the Blind-Followers, who rule that it is necessary for scholars and the common man alike to make Taqleed of a particular Imaam.

its meaning and employ every conceivable trick to rebut it, so that the saying of their Imaam should appear to be correct.⁶⁵ Taking the sayings of the scholars and their analogies is like the use of tayammum, which is only used when water is not found. So when a text of the Book and the Sunnah and the sayings of the Companions - radi-Allaahu ‘anhum - are to be found, then it is obligatory to take that and not to turn away from that to the saying of the scholars.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ This can be seen in the writings of Abu’l-Hasan al-Karkhi (d.340 A.H.), who produced a tract on the principles of Hanafee law. In this tract he lays down the following rules:

“Any Qur’aanic verse which contradicts the opinion of ‘our masters’ will be construed as having been abrogated, or the rule of preference will apply thereto. It is better that the verse in question be interpreted in such a way that it conforms to their opinion.”

Further he remarks:

“Any tradition (Hadeeth) which contradicts the opinion of ‘our masters’ will be construed as having been abrogated, or it will be deemed that the tradition in question contradicts some other parallel tradition (which coincides with the opinion of the masters). The argument will, therefore, be based on the parallel tradition (which conforms to their opinion) or, if there is no parallel tradition, the rule of preference will be applied as was done by ‘our masters’. In case the rule of preference is not applicable, the tradition will be interpreted in such a way that it harmonizes with their opinion.”

⁶⁶ This saying of al-Ma’soomee - rahimahullaah - is like what ash-Shaafi’ee said in *ar-Risaalah* (p. 599-600, printing of Shaakir), where he clearly states,

“...since analogy is not permissible when a text is present, just as tayammum is a means of purification only when water is not to be found.”

16. THE UMMAH WILL ONLY BE CORRECTED BY THAT WHICH CORRECTED ITS BEGINNING

Imaam Maalik - rahimahullaah - said:

“The latter part of this Ummah will only be set right by that which set right its beginning.”

There is no doubt that the first and best of the Ummah clung to the Book and the Sunnah. Then the Muslims turned away from that which Allaah, the Most High, prescribed, to that which they invented. Then it is not surprising that they were prevented from the victory which Allaah promised to the Believers, since they were stripped of all the attributes of the Believers which Allaah mentioned. There never was in the first two centuries, anything of this blind-following and the actions which they are now performing.

If an intelligent person became a Muslim now, then he would not know what he is supposed to do or which madhhab and which books of the fundamentals he should depend upon. It would be difficult to convince him that this alone is the straight religion or that all the madhhabs despite their differences are the same thing, just as has happened now in Japan. If we Muslims had halted at the limits quoted in the Qur’aan and explained in the light of Prophetic guidance, then it would have been easy to understand the true religion which contains no crookedness or hardship. That is the pure Deen which contains no deviation or discrepancy.

17. THE STATEMENT OF FAKHR UD-DEEN AR-RAAZEE

Fakhr ud-Deen ar-Raazee, who died 606H - rahimahullaah - said in Tafseer of the verse in *Mafaateeh ul-Ghayb* (4/431)⁶⁷

“They (Jews and Christians) took their rabbis and monks as lords besides Allaah” [Soorah at-Tawbah (9):31]

“I have seen a group of the blind-following men of fiqh and have recited to them many aayaat from the Book of Allaah, the Most High, concerning some matters which their madhhabs were contrary to those aayaat and they would not accept these aayaat or give any attention to them. Instead, they stood looking at me in surprise, meaning, ‘How can it be possible to act upon the clear meaning of these aayaat, when the reports from our forefathers are at variance with them.’ If you considered carefully, you would find that this poison runs through the veins of most of the people in this world.”

⁶⁷ The same is mentioned by the reviver of the Sunnah al-Baghawee in *Ma’aalim ut-Tanzeel*.

18. THE GREATEST IMAAM IS ALLAAH'S MESSENGER (SAL-ALLAAHU 'ALAYHE WA SALLAM)

Al-Murtadaa az-Zubaydee said in his explanation of *al-Ihya*,

“Know that the only one who is followed without question is the one who came with the Sharee’ah, the noblest of us, Muhammad (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam), in what he ordered and said. The Companions radi-Allaahu ‘anhum, are to be followed, since their actions are an indication of what they heard from him (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam). This is what we are ordered to follow, nothing else. Therefore, Ibn ‘Abbaas (radi-Allaahu anhumaa), said,

‘There is not anyone except that some of his knowledge is taken and some abandoned except for Allaah’s Messenger (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam)’”⁶⁸

Blind-following of madhhabs has become a chronic disease and a widespread misfortune which has spread over the world. We do not find anyone who will give preference to the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Messenger over what their books contain and the sayings of their shaykhs, except for a few. But we praise and thank Allaah, the Most High, that we have seen a group of our worshippers of Allaah in Tawheed, calling the people to Tawheed and fighting Jihaad for Allaah correctly and waging war upon the blind-followers, the people of superstition and the dajjaals. For this purpose societies working together have been set up to promote and spread Tawheed. This has been done in the Hijaaz, Egypt, Sudan, Sinjar in Iraq and other places. O Allaah! Grant them increase and aid them as long as they aid your Deen, aameen, O Lord of the worlds!

Sayyid Siddeeq Hasan says in his Tafseer *Fath ul-Bayaan Fee Maqaasid il-Qur’aan* (4/117) concerning the saying of Allaah, the Most High:

“The (Jews and Christians) took their rabbis and monks as lords besides Allaah” [Soorah at-Tawbah (9):31]

“This aayah contains a warning for those with a heart, or for he who listens and witnesses, about blind-following regarding Allaah’s Deen and about preferring the sayings of forefathers to what is contained in the Mighty Book of Allaah and the pure Sunnah, since it is indeed like the Jews and Christians taking their rabbis and monks as lords besides Allaah; though they definitely did not take them as objects of direct worship but had obeyed them and declared forbidden what they declared forbidden and allowed what they allowed and this is also the practise of the blind-followers from this Ummah. In fact it is more similar to it than one egg to another, a date to another date. So, servants of Allaah and followers of Muhammad Ibn ‘Abdullaah (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam), what is wrong with you that you have left the Book and the Sunnah aside and instead have taken to (following) men, who like you have been obligated

⁶⁸ Al-Iraaqee said that it is reported by at-Tabaraanee in *al-Kabeer*.

by Allaah to worship him by these two (the Book and the Sunnah) and required by Him to act upon them and that which they indicate. You have instead acted upon opinions which they gave, not supported by the texts of the Book and the Sunnah. You have stubbornly opposed with deaf ears, closed hearts, sick minds, decrepit intellect, feeble understanding and ailing thoughts. You have stated by your actions, ‘I am not except a follower of Ghuzayyah, if she goes astray, I go astray and if Ghuzayyah follows the right way, I follow the right way.’”

May Allaah guide you and me! Leave the books written for you by your dead forefathers as substitutes for the Book of Allaah, their (the Imaam’s) Lord and your Lord, the One to Whom they and you are devoted, the One Whom they worshipped and you worship. (Who has the right to) substituted the sayings and opinions of those whom you call your Imaams, for the sayings of your (true) Imaam and their Imaam, your example and their example, the first Imaam, Muhammad ibn ‘Abdullaah.

Leave every saying for the saying of the Prophet Muhammad (sal-Allaahu ‘alayhe wa sallam), since one safely upon his Deen is not like one risking danger. (Besides it is the Messenger who conveys to us our Deen) as Allaah says:

“The Messenger’s duty is but to convey (the Message)” [Soorah ash-Shoora (42):48]

“Your duty is to convey (the message)” [Soorah al-Ma’idah (5):99]

“Your duty is only to convey (the Message)” [Soorah Aal-Imraan (3):20 & Soorah ar-Ra’d (13):40]

These aayaat use the various terms of restriction (i.e. that the Messenger is only to convey), which is the strongest form of proof.

19. ALLAAH HAS ORDERED US TO PROCEED UPON THE STRAIGHT PATH

Allaah, the Most High, has ordered us in this world to proceed upon His Straight Path, with which He sent His Messengers and His Books. He informed that this Straight Path is the one that reaches His Paradise and His reward and to the extent of a worshipper's firmness upon this Straight Path which Allaah, the Most High, has established for His servants in this life, will be his safety upon the Bridge (Siraat) over Hell.

Allaah, the Most High, says,

“Verily, this is My Straight Path, so follow it and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His Path. This He has ordained for you that you may become *al-Muttaqoon* (the pious).”
[Soorah al-An'aam (6):153]

Since the person who seeks the Straight Path is seeking something which most people fail to attain. The one following this way may feel lonely and so Allaah, the Most Perfect, promises him of the company in the hereafter, of the Prophets (alayhimus-salaam), their true followers, the martyrs and the Pious. And what good company to be in! So that the period of loneliness and isolation in this world, of the seeker of the guidance and follower of the Straight Path will soon pass away. He should know that his true companions are those upon the correct path, and they are the ones whom Allaah has blessed, and should not grieve because he goes against those who stray. Those who do not follow guidance, are of the least significance, even if they are greater in number, just as Al-Fudayl ibn 'Iyaad - rahimahullaah said,

“Follow the path of truth and do not feel dismayed at the small numbers of those who take that way and beware of the way of misguidance and do not be deceived by the large numbers of those who go towards destruction.”

The worshipper must therefore be careful to avoid the way of those upon whom is Allaah's anger and those who are astray. Those upon whom is anger are those who are corrupt with regard to their knowledge and intentions, those who know the truth and turn away from it and the astray are those who are corrupt due to ignorance, they are ignorant and unaware of the truth.

The truth is what Allaah's Messenger Muhammad (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) and his Companions - radi-Allaahu 'anhum - were upon, not the opinions, compilations, thoughts and practices of men. So every piece of knowledge, action, truth, state, or position coming from the lamp of his Prophethood and having his seal upon it, then it is from the Straight Path and whatever is not like that is from the path of the people of misguidance, the Hell-Fire and His Anger.⁶⁹

There is no doubt that from the signs of the rightly guided is that they believe in all of the Prophets - 'alayhimus-salaatu was-salaam, not differentiating in that and submitting to them and to what they brought and following the truth wherever it is

⁶⁹ See *Madaarij us-Saalikeen* of Ibn ul-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (1/21-23).

and to behave well and with respect towards them. Since this is the case, then it is also obligatory to show respect to their heirs, from the Companions, Taabi'een and mujtahid Imaams such as the four Imaams and their like from the scholars of the People of Hadeeth - radi-Allaahu 'anhum.

Accepting the sayings of one scholar and leaving the sayings of others, or loving some and hating the rest, as is the practice of most of the blind-followers of the madhhabs, is not from the guidance of the rightly-guided, nor from the attributes of the Pious. Some of this enmity has spread between those who ascribe themselves to the madhhabs to the point that they will not pray behind anyone who is not from their madhhab, so their blind-following is ignorance which has blinded their hearts and vision.

From the people of misguidance are those who make the madhhab the basis and seek to cause the Qur'aan to agree with it by interpreting and twisting it, as is the practice of the forsaken and the misguided. The truth and that which is obligatory is that the Qur'aan is the basis with which the madhhabs and opinions in the Deen are to be tested; so whatever agrees with it is acceptable and whatever conflicts with it is rejected.

20. TRUTH ACCEPTED ONLY FROM THE PEOPLE OF THEIR OWN MADHHAB

From the attributes of those upon whom is Allaah's anger is that they will only accept the truth from the group which they ascribe to. Further, they do not even follow what their belief demands of them, as is the case with many of those who ascribe themselves to a particular group, concerning knowledge of the Deen, whether to scholars, or soofees or others. They will not accept any opinion or narration in the Deen except for what their own group brings. Whereas the Deen of Islaam obligates following the truth without restriction, whether the result of narration or opinion, without particularising any personality, except for Allaah's Messenger (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam). Since wisdom is the lost property of the Believer that he picks up wherever he finds it.

If we examine the sayings of the scholars of fiqh, their differing views, disagreements and excuses, then we will be totally bewildered. Some of them making such statements as, 'Its evidence is strong but it is not acted upon, nor is verdict given according to it.' Why? Because someone said something else! So the saying of a single man out of many men, of whom we do not know the history of, is enough to abandon an authentic, established Sunnah, even though it is apparent that well-being lies in following the Sunnah. Therefore the connection between our situation, and the foundation and fountain of the Deen is cut off. What is correct is that, it is not permissible for anyone to refer back in anything of his belief ('Aqeedah) or acts of worship except to Allaah, the Most High, and to His Messenger to whom it was revealed, just as it is binding upon us to believe that judgement is for Allaah alone and that the Deen does not come from other than Him. By this we will be worshippers of Allaah alone, making our Deen sincerely for Him, just as He ordered us in His clear Book and he who does other than that, is one of those who take others as partners (besides Allaah) and of the destroyed. Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, said:

“When those who were followed, disown those who followed (them) and they see the torment, then all their relations will be cut off from them. Those who followed will say, ‘If only we had one more chance to return (to worldly life), we would disown them as they have disowned us.’ Thus, Allaah will show them their deeds as regards for them. They will never get out of the Fire.” [Sooratul-Baqarah (2):166-167]

Know that this aayah is an earth-shattering blow to the blind-followers for their stubbornness upon the sayings and opinions of men concerning the Deen, whether living or dead, whether it is blind-following in matters of belief or worship, or lawful and prohibited; since all of these are to be taken only from Allaah and His Messenger. There is no room for anyone's opinion or saying, that includes the leaders of misguidance.

As for the rightly-guided scholars, then all of them forbade the worship of other than Allaah, the Most High, and depending upon other than Allaah and upon other than His Revelation in the Deen. Some of those who do Tafseer declare that these aayaat (verses) apply to the disbelievers in particular, but it is a mistake to understand from these words anything which will separate the Muslims from the Qur'aan. Some

people take every warning in it to apply to the Mushriks, the Jews and the Christians (only) and therefore do not take the desired warning themselves.

Therefore you find that the Muslims do not take admonition from the Qur'aan. Rather, they think that mere verbal profession of 'Laa Ilaaha IllAllaah', without fulfilling its rights is enough for salvation in the Hereafter, even though many hypocrites and unbelievers say it. Whereas Allaah, the Most High, has mentioned the manifestation of Shirk and the attributes and condition of the unbelievers as a warning for those who believe in His Book, so that they do not fall into what others fell into and thus be of those who are doomed.

The heads of the blind-followers have set up a barrier between the Muslims and the Book of their Lord, claiming that those able to receive guidance from it have passed away, and that it is not possible to find the like of them, due to the conditions which they have laid down (which are not easily accomplished by other than them; such as knowledge of a set number of fields of knowledge), even though the Pious Predecessors; the Companions and the Taabi'een and likewise the four Imaams (may Allaah be pleased with all of them), are all agreed that it is not permissible for anyone to accept any one's saying in the Deen without knowing his proof. Then came the scholars of the blind-followers and gave the saying of the mufti, the status of proof for the common person, then a further generation became drowned in blind-following and forbade anyone from taking any ruling from the Book and the Sunnah. They regarded anyone who tried to understand them as being suspicious and this is the limit of disgrace and the worst depravity and entity to the Deen and the people have followed them in this, so that they took partners besides Allaah. They will disassociate themselves from each other (on the Day of Resurrection). The follower of a madhhab honours a certain person in his heart and so follows him without considering his words, blindly following his forefathers and the people of his land. This is certain misguidance, since it should be the saying that is looked at not who is speaking, just as Alee - radi-Allaahu 'anhu - said,

“Indeed truth is not known due to the men. Know the truth and you will then know its people.”

All good lies in following the orders and actions of Allaah's Messenger (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) and his Companions - radi-Allaahu 'anhum - and likewise the Pious Predecessors - rahimahumullaah - and all evil and misguidance lies in that which the late-comers have introduced into the Deen and there is no doubt that the taking of madhhabs is an innovation in the Deen which was started by governors and rulers for political aims, or their whims, or to pressure their positions, or out of party-spirit for their Shaykhs, as is known to everyone who studies history.

Shah Waliyyullaah ad-Dehlawee says in *at-Tafheemaat ul-Ilaahiyyah* (1/206),

“You will see the masses today, in every region, restricting themselves to a single madhhab from the previous madhhabs and they think that a person leaving the madhhab of the one he follows even if in a single matter is like his having left the religion, as if that (Imaam) were a Prophet (sal-Allaahu 'alayhe wa sallam) sent for him, whom it is obligatory to follow, whereas the first scholars and the best generations,

before the fourth century had not used to restrict themselves to a single madhhab.”

So this matter has caused the people to fear and to behave foolishly and therefore misfortunes and party spirit have resulted

21. THE PROPHET (SAL-ALLAAHU ‘ALAYHE WA SALLAM) DID NOT MAKE IT A DUTY TO FOLLOW A SINGLE MADHHAB

The truth is that the Messenger did not obligate the people to stick to the madhhab of any particular scholar, rather he obligated that he himself should be followed. So whoever differs from the Sunnah of Allaah’s Messenger after it is affirmed then his differing is rejected and he has no excuse. However if the Hadeeth did not reach him, then he may be excused until the Hadeeth reaches him. But once an authentic Hadeeth reaches him, it is not allowed for anyone who claims to be a Muslim to say, ‘I will not act upon Hadeeth, rather I will act upon the saying of my Imaam’, since this would lead him to apostasy and the refuge of Allaah, the Most High, is sought.

So it is binding that the Muslim reflects upon the authentic Hadeeth and keeps them before him and clings to it with his heart and hand and not pay attention to anyone who differs with him about that. This is the straight way, so take this as your only madhhab and do not leave it.

Then, O Muslim, if you aspire to knowledge and are resolved upon taqwaa, then keep to understanding the clear meaning of the Qur’aan and evident meaning of the Sunnah Seek out the Saheeh and Hasan narrations reported in the books of the scholars of Hadeeth and take to what is strongest, most fitting and safe. Taking this way is easy, it needs no more than the Muwatta, the two Saheehs and the Sunan of Abu Daawood, the Jaami’ of at-Tirmidhee and an-Nasaa’ee. These books are well-known and famous and can be obtained very quickly, so learn this. But if you are unable and are preceded in this by some of your brothers who can explain these to you in your own language, then you have no excuse remaining and Allaah, the Most High, knows best.

‘Allaamah Ibn ul-Qayyim says in A’laam ul-Muwaqqi’een (4/261),

“Does the common person have to follow one of the well known madhhabs or not.

There are two sayings regarding this:

First, that it is not obligatory upon him and this is what is correct and definite, since there is nothing obligatory except what Allaah, the Most High, and His Messenger have made obligatory and neither Allaah nor His Messenger made it obligatory to follow the madhhab of any person from the Ummah and to follow him alone in the Deen. The best generations passed by without anyone doing this. Indeed the common person cannot have a madhhab, even if he thinks that he does. Rather the common person has no madhhab at all because the madhhab will be for the one who is able to research to a certain level and understand evidence and also know about the other madhhabs or for the one who has read a book concerning the details of that madhhab and knows the ruling and sayings of his Imaam.

As for the one who is unable to do any of that but merely says ‘I am a Shaafi’ee’ or ‘I am a Hanbalee’ etc. Then he does not become that just by

saying so, just as would be the case if he said ‘I am a religious scholar’ or ‘I am a scholar of grammar’ or ‘I am a writer’ then he does not become that just by saying so.⁷⁰

This is further clarified by the fact that the one who says, ‘I am a Shaafi’ee’ or ‘a Maalikee’ or ‘a Hanafee’, claiming that he follows that Imaam and his way, this would only be true if he were to follow his way in acquiring knowledge, understanding and extraction of proof. As for this one, with his ignorance and being far from the manners of the Imaam and his knowledge and way, then how can it be correct for him to ascribe himself to him except with mere claims and empty words having no meaning?! How can the common person have a madhhab, and even if it could be imagined, then still it would not be obligatory upon him or anyone else to ever have to follow the madhhab of a certain man from the Ummah; such that he accepts all his sayings and rejects everyone else’s sayings. This is a filthy innovation introduced into the Ummah; no scholar of Islaam has ever said this and they are higher in station and better knowing about Allaah than to order the people with this. Even further from the truth is the saying of those who say that he must stick to the madhhab of a single scholar and even further from the truth is the one who says, he must follow one of the four madhhabs! O Allaah, how strange!

The madhhabs of the Companions of Allaah’s Messenger have died out and those of the Taabi’een and those who came after them and those of the rest of the scholars of Islaam and all been invalidated except for the madhhabs of four men only from amongst all the rest of the scholars and Imaams?! Rather that which Allaah, the most High and His Messenger made obligatory upon the Sahaabah, the Taabi’een and those who came after them is the same as that He made obligatory upon those after them until the Day of Resurrection.

It is not obligatory upon a common man nor upon the mufti to limit himself to one of the four Imaams. Upon this is the ijmaa’ of the Ummah; just as it is not obligatory upon the scholar to restrict himself to the Hadeeth reported by the people of his land or any land in particular, rather, if any Hadeeth is authentic it is obligatory to act upon it, whether it is reported of the people of the Hijaaz or ‘Iraaq or Shaam or Egypt or Yemen.”

I will now mention some of the reasons why these madhhabs have become widespread in all areas, so that it may be a lesson for those possessing intellect or those who listen and witness to the truth.

⁷⁰ Imaam Abu Haneefah said,

“It is forbidden for anyone who does not know my proofs to make a ruling according to my statements, for verily we are only humans we may say something today and reject it tomorrow. “ [Ibn ‘Abdul-Barr, *al-Intiqaa fee Fadaa’il ath-Thalaathah al-A’immah al-Fuqahaa*, p. 145]

Here is what is reported in history. Ahmad al-Muqree al-Maghribi says in his book *Nafh ut-Teeb min Ghasn il-Andalus ir-rateeb* (3/158),

“The reason why the people of Morocco took up the madhhab of Imaam Maalik - rahimahullaah, is that the people of Morocco and Spain were originally upon the madhhab of al-Awzaa’ee, and likewise Shaam, from where they were conquered. Then during the rule of al-Hakam ibn Hishaam ibn ‘Abdir-Rahmaan ad-Daakhilee who was the third ruler of Spain from the Umayyads, the official fatwas were changed and given according to the opinion of Maalik ibn Anas - rahimahullaah - and the people of al-Madeenah. This was due to the opinion and preference of al-Hakam due to some political benefits he saw and they differ about the actual reason. Most hold that it was due to the scholars of Spain travelling to al-Madeenah, then when they returned to Spain they spoke of the excellence of Maalik, his wide knowledge and great station, so they honoured him and preferred his madhhab. Others say that Imaam Maalik - rahimahullaah - asked some of the people of Spain about the rule in Spain and they described it to him and Maalik was very pleased by it since the ‘Abbasids in that time did not rule in a manner that was agreeable. So, Imaam Maalik said to the person who told him,

‘We ask Allaah to enlighten our sacred precincts with your rule.’

This was transmitted to the ruler of Spain, who already knew of the knowledge, excellence and piety of Maalik; so he lead the people to accept his madhhab and ordered that the madhhab of al-Awzaa’ee be abandoned.⁷¹

The kings of Morocco and the west agreed that the rulings and actions should be according to the preferences of Ibn al-Qaasim (a famous student of Maalik) only⁷². So the madhhabs became a toy of the rulers and their politics. So take note!”

If you wish to see the reasons behind the appearance of madhhabs and sectarian orders then read the introduction of *Taareekh Ibn Khaldoon* because he explains excellently. May Allaah reward him with good. He shows that the madhhabs originated and became widespread due to tyrannical politics.

⁷¹ In Syria, the Madhhab of al-Awzaa’ee remained the main school of thought until the tenth century, when Abu Zar’ah Muhammad ibn Uthmaan of the Shaafi’ee Madhhab was appointed judge of Damascus. Abu Zar’ah began the practice of giving a prize of one hundred dinars to any student who memorized the book, *Mukhtasr al-Muzanee* (the basics of Shaafi’ee fiqh). Naturally, the practice caused the Shaafi’ee Madhhab to spread rapidly in Syria, until none of al-Awzaa’ee’s followers remained until the eleventh century. [*al-Madkhal*, p.205-206. Also see ‘Abdullah Muhammad al-Jabooree, *Fiqh al-Imaam al-Awzaa’ee*]

⁷² Another good example is that of Abu Yoosuf who was the prominent student of Imaam Aboo Haneefah and appointed as the chief judge by the Abbaasid Caliphs (al-Mahdee, al-Hadee and Haroon ar-Rasheed). In this capacity he used to appoint judges for the various cities and all his appointees were followers of the Hanafee Madhhab. He was thus instrumental in the spread of the Hanafee Madhhab throughout the Muslim empire. [Shah Waleeallaah ad-Dahlawee, *al-Insaaf fee Bayaan Asbaab al-Ikhtilaaf*, p.39]

If you wish to read about the emergence of these different madhhabs which are at variance with Islaam and cause division amongst the Muslims, then refer to *Ighaathat ul-Lahfaan min Masaa'id ish-Shaitaan*, particularly the latter part of it where there is an explanation of the hidden truths about Ibn Seenah, an-Naseer at-Toosee and of the 'Ubaidees, Faatimids and others. In short, the enemies of Islaam managed to change Islaam by splitting its people into madhhabs and sects.

Imaam Shihaabuddeen 'Abdur-Rahmaan, well known as Abu Shaamah, who died in the year 665 H, said in his book *al-Mu'ammal lir-radd ilal Amr il-Awwal* (1/10),

“The people have satisfied themselves from the sciences of the Qur'aan with merely memorising its Soorahs and by reporting a few different ways of reciting it and have neglected knowledge of its explanation, meanings and extraction of its rulings. They restrict themselves from the sciences of Hadeeth to merely hearing a few books narrated by Shaykhs who are mostly more ignorant than they are themselves. There are some that satisfy themselves with the rubbish of the minds of men and the refuse of their thoughts. They satisfy themselves with transmitting from the people of their own madhhab.... Yet a person is still deluded into thinking that he is a leading scholar whereas with Allaah and with the scholars of the Deen he is one of the most ignorant of people.”

This is the end of what I intended to compose concerning the question about blind-following of madhhabs, which came to me from the far east, from the land of Japan. I will suffice with this much since a drop is an indication of the ocean. It is Allaah who is the one we ask to make it of benefit to His servants in all the lands and to make it a pure action sincerely for His Noble Face and a reason for attaining the bliss of the gardens of Paradise.

This was written in Allaah's safeguarded land in my house in the Bukhaaree quarter near to Masjid ul-Haraam on the fifteenth of the sacred month of Muharram, 1358 H.

Our final call is:

“Glory to your Lord, the Lord of Honour and Power! (He is free) from what they ascribe (to Him)! Peace be upon the Messengers! Praise be to Allaah, the Lord of the worlds” [Sooratus-Saffaat (37):180-182]